

# THE DIFFUSION OF ENGLISH CULTURE OUTSIDE ENGLAND

*A Problem of Post-War Reconstruction*

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## FOREWORD

THE Diffusion of English Culture is a comparatively unfamiliar subject to the general reading public, presumably because it is regarded as an isolated and rather specialised problem, of interest only to those immediately concerned. In reality, it concerns us all, because it is linked to some of the biggest present-day questions. It cannot be profitably discussed without considering problems as wide and as wide apart as the future of humanism and the future of philology; the prestige of diplomacy and the prestige of culture; international rivalry and international friendship; the establishment of a world-language and the many ways in which a language should not be learnt; the ideal teacher and the administrative system which might turn his ideals to practical use; the cult of nationality in the international state of the future.

Obviously these are not ideas which claim attention in their own right. They are theories which interest us only so far as they can become facts. Some are already expressed in facts. So the discussion must be constructive or else valueless; it must deal with ways and means. On the other hand, this is not the place to review what has already been done or left undone; such criticism would only obscure the issue; and accordingly no allusion will be made to existing organisations, much less to their methods and procedure. The aim of the present essay is to visualise

the essentials of the movement, its scope and conditions—the rules of the game.

At any rate the present writer has had the opportunity to consider all these problems in a practical prosaic light, and has certainly not missed his full share of trials by the way, particularly *human* trials.

H. V. ROUTH

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## CHAPTER I

### DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE

MORE than a century ago thoughtful men had begun to wonder whether national barriers would soon be effaced, and the world, or at any rate Europe, would be a single economic state. In 1816 Adam Müller explained that as soon as wealth began to be vested in commodities rather than in land, it became exchangeable through currency, and therefore international; consequently those who handled money also became, to that extent, international. In 1856 Emerson wrote: "Nations are getting obsolete, we go and live where we will. Steam has enabled men to choose what law they will live under. Money makes place for them." In 1870 Froude was prepared to expect that patriotism would soon be hardly more than a sentiment. Since so many individuals already looked for their incomes outside their own motherland and owed their allegiance to some industrial organisation which spread its tentacles over the globe, their loyalties would follow their interests. Where their treasure was, there would their hearts be. Why has this expansion not continued? Currency can certainly cross frontiers; the staple industries have continued to cross them; so has culture, especially science; so has Catholicism, which was then, and still is, gaining ground. Thus civilised people might still be expected to preserve a sentimental attachment to the land of their birth, but their occupations and pre-

occupations would be international. They would live by coal, iron, textiles (we should now add oil, radium), and would belong to the world-wide commodity they served. Even the man of learning would think in terms of Europe and America, whether interested in Free Verse or Relativity. Thus it might be expected that all peoples would gradually become like the Welsh, Scots, Cornish, Bretons and Catalans—racial groups who clung to their identity but were willingly merged into the larger whole.

Such were the probabilities of the nineteenth century, but since then, the spirit of defensive and offensive nationality has revived and grown more intense year by year.

There are several reasons for this reversion. In the first place, international commerce never reached the stage of mutual confidence. It has not even been conducted on equal terms. Exports and imports might everywhere tally, but long before nations had had time to trust each other it was realised that some countries could contribute only luxuries, yet were dependent on others for their vital necessities; and what was bestowed to-day might well be withheld to-morrow. A community which exchanges fruit for manufactured steel may at any time lose the means of livelihood. Hence the anxiety of the less favoured governments to protect themselves by tariffs and currency restrictions, to maintain standing armies, and to hold closer together so that their political influence might be felt. This defensive attitude became all the more frequent because some of the quite small states had been raised by a geographical peculiarity to a dangerous eminence. One thinks at once of Belgium,

Portugal, or Greece with her five ports commanding the eastern Mediterranean.

Thus, among the so-called comity of nations, an old situation has been so intensified as to become new. There are a number of states, thrown up, as it were, in the volcanic convulsions of the civilised world, which desire nothing more than peace and progress, but are cursed with some accidental endowment too precious to be ignored by their powerful neighbours. In the political sense of the term one might almost define a neutral country as one which cannot fight, but has something special to fight for.

These suspicions and jealousies might, as in former centuries, have been confined to chancelleries, cabinets, and council-chambers. But they have since blended with another and less obvious influence of great importance, which is now beginning to colour international diplomacy. During the nineteenth century everybody has learnt to read, write, and calculate. In fact even the most backward governments insist that all their children shall be instructed, and even the most corrupt and inefficient take infinite pains to impose good methods and systems. All seem to recognise that education is necessary to survival. But very few appear to have foreseen that they were also teaching their subjects to think and talk, and were thereby creating new problems for themselves and their rivals.

These problems are more complex than might at first sight appear. Naturally no government is content with a merely practical education. All of them provide that everybody should be taught something about his own

country—its history, geography, economic possibilities, art, literature and science—thereby learning to be patriotic. But thereby everybody also learnt that his country's prosperity was, or might be, precarious, dependent on the control of certain sources of raw material, or of certain trade-routes and strategic points. Thus he acquired the habit of distrusting all nations but his own. School-taught patriotism soon began to exercise a more penetrating influence. It is a noticeable fact that nations, when unprosperous, seldom produce great literature, science, or art. On the other hand they seem to reach an unusually high or widespread level of intelligence. These second-class powers and buffer-states are full of people who have opinions and interests of their own. The average citizen or peasant, though sedulously and meanly busy in his daily chafferings and domestic squabbles, always feverously anxious to sell anything to anybody, has yet trained himself to be a political speculator or dreamer, a votary of catchwords and tabloid theories, at once critical and idealistic. Their restless, fussy brains seem to blend and interlace into one composite communal mind, which cannot be ignored. It becomes a power to move mountains, and therefore the opportunity of statesmen.

The first to see the opportunity were, of course, the "patriots" and political adventurers. They realised that the people held the fate of their country not indeed in their hands but in their heads. They were not like sheep, though Hitler once described them as such, but more like motor-cars and aeroplanes, which must be studied, tended, managed, and will serve only those who can humour their powerful mechanism. The experts in this

art become dictators, leaders, authoritarians; and it is to be noticed that they exhaust every artifice to nurse the public will. The precautions they take are endless, and it is to be noticed that what they have to fear is not apathy but intellectual curiosity. Ideas have to be censored, because they may anywhere take root.

When a people becomes so impressionable and receptive to the forces from within, it is also accessible to certain influences from without. Nor were foreign observers blind to the opportunity. The many-headed object of their attentions is, of course, chiefly interested in its own affairs, but for that very reason it wants to know what other countries are like. Being concerned about its own destiny, it is curious to learn how its neighbours have managed theirs, especially the first-class powers with which it has to deal. We are not now thinking of States which have followed a continuous line of development, backed by traditions of culture and civilisation to which, through all vicissitudes, they have remained more or less true. But the civilised world is dotted with new nationalities, for instance the Balkans, Palestine, or Egypt: with old nationalities which have broken so completely with their past that they have to begin life over again—for instance Poland, Japan, and perhaps Italy; or again with those which have hitherto failed to keep pace with the march of modern civilisation, either paralysed in the immaturity of youth, or apparently incapable of rejuvenescence—for instance Spain, Turkey, Iraq. All these and others like them know that they are not self-sufficient; their culture lacks continuity; their industrial system has not produced highly organised

factories and commercial connections. Above all, with a few exceptions, they speak languages which no Great Power wants to learn, and which are often unequal to the complexities of Western thought. So they cannot fulfil their national ambitions without borrowing from the culture and technology of more successful and fortunate nations. Their position is anomalous. They are, in most cases, authoritarian and exclusively national in sentiment, intensely jealous of their intellectual and political independence; and yet, for all their pretensions, they know that they need the patronage as well as protection of some world-power. The world-powers are fully aware of this dependence.

But we must not imagine that all this intellectual curiosity is solely inspired by the instinct of self-preservation. That may be the original and most prevalent impulse, but thought is always so progressive and stimulating, and knowledge of any kind so quickly creates its own interests, that learners soon forget their national preoccupations and become, in thought, citizens of the world, or at least members of the international commonwealth of letters and science. It cannot be too often repeated that culture now transcends boundaries as easily as the postal service does, and that the cosmopolitanism of the intellect is one of the most irresistible movements towards that world-state which is, perhaps, not so distant as it seems. It is a fact of importance that even the smallest and most isolationist communities have each produced their "cultured few" ready to welcome world influences. Thus cultural and political influences work side by side.

For all these reasons the "neutral" countries are ready

to learn. At the same time and by the same token the conquering powers are only too anxious to teach. For prestige follows the lead of culture—or so they think. If these lesser authoritarian (or at least constructive) governments have to appeal to the intelligence of their subjects, the ministries of the other bigger countries can and must further their foreign policy by the same methods, wherever possible availing themselves of man's unsatiable curiosity in the things of the spirit. Such is the new diplomacy—the control of our own and other nations, through their sympathies and antipathies.

It has a curious history. The French led the way. Under the *Ancien Régime* they were the recognised leaders in humanism and intellectual refinement. Even after the reversals of 1870–1 they refused to accept defeat. The Sorbonne could still boast of the most cosmopolitan attendance in the world; their authors were the most discussed; their actors and actresses the most admired; their capital was recognised as the natural home of disinterested study and artistic enthusiasms. Many a Frenchman might despair of the French Empire—in fact this people with its fatal talent for clear-sightedness has been defeatist for at least four generations—but no Frenchman despaired of French humanism. So while they resigned themselves with the shrug of a *Je-m'en-ficheiste* to the loss of their political hegemony, they clung with astonishing tenacity to their position as the leading influence in civilisation.

Until the beginning of the Four Years War, France had it more or less her own way, and she used her opportunities with a most commendable freedom from political

intrigue. Her only rivals, at first, were the Americans, who from time to time deposited a school or institute in some unhappy region in order that the boys and girls of a backward race, or undeveloped area, might enjoy some sound education—some *uplift* and other-worldliness—amidst their poverty.

Other and more formidable rivals have since appeared in the field. The twentieth century was still young when tourists began to notice that even in the most out of the way places it was easy to buy German goods and meet natives who could speak the German language; and sure enough there was a good school in the neighbourhood, equipped with German money, and holding evening classes for adults. Then it appeared that the Italians were also taking an interest in the commercial and intellectual welfare of the country, in much the same way, and with an even more lavish expenditure, though with less success. Then it was observed that many of the university professors spoke a foreign language, and on inquiry it transpired that a surprisingly large number of teachers had enjoyed one or more years of post-graduate study in a foreign country; generally in Germany. Thus it might soon be possible for a foreign power to control or at least influence the higher education of this or that country.

In these ventures and investments, the propagandists could profess to be nothing more than benefactors. They were expending much money and talent for the good of the country in question. They offered their own civilisation and culture in order to gain—what? The friendship of the beneficiaries.

The English were more or less the last to compete: less

than six years ago. There had always been, and still is in some quarters, the opinion that the British Empire does not need to advertise. Its reputation should be enough—backed by armed cruisers and the ability to float international loans. But from time to time the more observant and public-spirited functionaries abroad—consuls, agents, representatives, even commercial travellers—kept warning us that our prestige was being overlooked, because our rivals were creeping into the intellectual consciousness of the peoples who ought to be looking to us. Where were English books, periodicals, films? Where were competent teachers of our language, not to mention our literature, art, and technology? By dint of repetition their warnings began to take effect. It was gradually realised that we were “losing ground”, being “left behind in the race” by our friendly enemies. At last public-spirited but private persons began to start a movement in favour of cultural as opposed to political propaganda. As far as can be ascertained, they were chiefly inspired by the evidence that other powers had found it worth while. Let us hope that some few half suspected that the culture of the future will be cosmopolitan and that those who share their knowledge with foreigners will be learning how to find it.

If so, they were indeed a few; for this movement, so big with possibilities, was apparently inaugurated without foresight or insight. Its object was defined as the diffusion of English literature and language, philosophy, art, science and technology; implying of course (most wisely) such accompaniments as theatrical tours, concert parties, films, and the circulation of English periodicals. It all sounds so simple, but generalities cover a multitude of sins which

sooner or later reappear. It is the purpose of the following chapters to explain why the path of the cultural propagandist is beset with pitfalls and how these gins and traps can be evaded. The inquiry is full of interest, casting an unfamiliar light on the civilisation of our age, on its methods of teaching and problems of administration, and—more important still—on the future of learning and humanism. Nor shall we be able to ignore the fascinating study of temperament and character, since these activities depend on the individualities engaged. Let us conclude with a preliminary glance at the subjects to be discussed.

First, what is culture? If we take the old-fashioned insular view, culture must mean the study of poets, dramatists, essay-writers, novelists and popular philosophers—especially the older classics in academic curricula—together with their background of social and political institutions, the fruit of England's historical development. But when the teacher begins to unlock this treasure house he is faced with the same difficulty abroad as at home: very few want to know anything about the masterpieces of the past. This contention will be disputed and must be discussed. For the moment it is enough to say that thousands of our own youth try for an Honours degree in English Literature and Language because they want to be teachers, and are not trained or inclined to study anything else. Hardly a hundredth part find in our great authors the thing most worth learning and thinking about; such a pursuit would (in their eyes) savour of retirement into a twentieth-century monastery. So with the foreigner. A small group may wish to specialise in English traditions, just as in our own country a small

group give up their lives to French, German, Greek or Chinese literature. The vast majority is groping between the old culture, now become an interesting collection of museum pieces, and the new culture, which is as yet hardly more than an atmosphere. In the meantime they discuss economics, inventions, money-making, the morals of Old Mother Nature, and watch the antics of their public men.

Yet this vast majority is almost passionately eager to learn the English language. About this surprising fact there can be no doubt whatever. Let an institute be opened in any foreign town, and learners will flock to it in hundreds, often in thousands. The reasons for this enthusiasm will be discussed later, and it will be seen that they do not all give grounds for self-congratulation, much less for complacency. But one cause is obvious: opportunities for learning English were formerly so few and unsatisfactory that the desire has accumulated. Both teachers and learners are benefiting by arrears. For the same reason we have not had time to prepare ourselves for the new enterprise. There is no army of linguistic missionaries to send forth. The harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few. So we must consider how we are to meet this demand (if it ought to be met): how select and train some hundreds of able men in the methods of modern linguistics, philosophy and phonetics, so that they may teach our language in the only ways leading to accurate and quickly acquired knowledge? This new science has now become so specialised and technical that we shall probably have to create a training centre for post-graduate studies and research.

Thus in teaching culture and the language that should lead to it, we are faced with a new problem. As regards culture we may have to relinquish a cult in which only a minority wholeheartedly believes, and create a humanism derived from international sources, such as the rising generation needs, ourselves taking precedence as the propagators of what is cosmopolitan. So with our language. It may be the best and only policy to forget that we are teaching English, and aim at diffusing an international parlance to replace the Latin of the Middle Ages and the French of the eighteenth century. Nay more, our teachers, if properly qualified, may create a new approach to anthropology and the study of ethnical psychology, and use their opportunities to collect valuable data for a comprehensive study of humanity.

What is true of the written and spoken word will, perhaps, be true of the export of films and epidiascopes, and the election to bursaries and scholarships. Both these important responsibilities will be discussed later, and we shall have to decide whether our best policy is the illustration of current events and customs—for instance, the evacuation from Dunkirk, the most sensational cup-tie—or whether films and pictures should also be used in classrooms to depict the common industries and processes, together with their idiomatic parlanges and dialects, all of which sound so familiar but are so different in different countries (compare an Egyptian's and a Frenchman's idea of bakery), or whether, again, these pictorial creations should aim at a wider extra-national purpose—the propagation of world-wide ideas and ideals which need illustration as well as exposition. So also

with the granting of bursaries and scholarships. Are they to be reserved for students interested in pursuits which are peculiarly English—e.g. literature, language, banking, local government—or should we create centres of international research and accept only those who seek not English institutions but a knowledge of English models?

It must by now be apparent that throughout this review we shall be forced to distrust generalisations (not principles, still less ideas) and try to visualise progress in contact with the unaccountable varieties of temperament, and the inevitably defective machinery of social and political organisation; to remember that we are dealing with temperaments, prejudices, and vested interests. This realism is particularly necessary if we are to take an intelligent interest in the administration behind our overseas educational service, and convince ourselves that public money is being well spent. The reader must picture a central office in London, from which teachers radiate all over the world, subdivided into institutes and schools; he must also remember that each foreign centre (however austere academic) is enmeshed in the social and political fabric of an un-English community, liable to be the object of suspicion, necessarily under the eye of the ambassador or consul-general. The problem of international relationships is always looming in the background. Under these circumstances it seems at first obvious that the scheme must be organised on the lines of a civil service, more or less controlled by the Foreign Office. And yet on the other hand the actual immediate object of this overseas service is education, not diplomacy or colonial govern-

ment; and the type of man who has been—or has wished to be—trained in administrative circles can hardly be the best material for the organising of this great experiment. The official mind is not noted for its many-sidedness or flexibility, but rather for an emmet-like perseverance, together with a paralysing assumption of professional infallibility. Besides, it appears that government clerks are unfortunate in their human contacts. During office hours, the time they can spare from minuting files seems to be spent in familiarising themselves with gentry who say one thing and mean another, or with those paternal colleagues who say and mean the same thing with the uncomplimentary emphasis of seniority. In their off time it is rumoured that they are generally to be found in “society”. That is to say, in all three categories they encounter representatives of civilisation more often than of culture. So they can hardly be trusted to handle the most unaccountable and individualised class of men, the university scholars.

This *genus irritabile* is a mystery to the layman. It has been bred in a tradition of free speech and academic self-government, unknown to other countries, and to other departments in this country. The best of its members have willingly sacrificed wealth and publicity in order to study and teach the things they live for, and they are well aware that they can follow their own careers in the congenial atmosphere of English educational life. They are not likely to risk their self-fulfilment in the employment of a service which cares nothing for their ideals, and is suspected of partiality to “confidential” reports, delations, personal opinions delivered behind closed doors, and

mechanised habits of mind. If we find that there is likelihood of such maladjustment, we shall also find that the best representatives of English culture decline to be caught; and the men in the office will have to employ the second-rate and rather ambiguous teachers who have very fair degrees, quite speciously pleasant manners, but appear almost suspiciously ready to leave their own country.

So, on second thoughts, it looks as if the overseas teaching service should be administered on the lines, and in the spirit, of a big American university. And yet there is so much business to be transacted—leases, balance-sheets, travelling expenses, cultural agreements, concessions, building sites—diffused among a score of nationalities, scattered over two hemispheres, constantly impinging, or liable to impinge, on the susceptibilities of half a million foreigners. Besides, scholars do strange things when plunged into an exotic atmosphere and saddled with responsibilities for which they have not been prepared in the curricula of their universities. Some, yielding to the climatic and social environment, even “go native”. One cannot imagine how a group of educationalists could adjust their administration to so many unfamiliar and specialised problems.

This formidable dilemma will have to be discussed if the public is to take an intelligent and practical interest in the project for which it has to pay.

To sum up the conclusions of this chapter: it looks as if we have already entered upon a new world-order. Every nation now being educated is also possessed by ideas, opinions, doctrines, and these have to be canalised,

no less than economic resources, or any other of the collective forces of society. We have to capitalise brains even more consistently than national debts. The power of community-thinking is now so urgent and ubiquitous that the leaders of every country are alive to the responsibility involved. For instance, we might note in passing that England, where so much is left to private enterprise, normally contains over a hundred organisations for the control of public opinion, from anti-vivisection to the British Navy League. In most other nations the citizen body is not trusted with so much independence. It must not be left to learn from any private teacher who can win an audience. It is the government who undertakes to train the *Vox Populi*, and should any sceptic object that politicians are usually content with journalistic catchwords and cheap appeals to expediency, he need only remember that every official manipulation has behind it an ideology which no doubt appeals to the imagination, but needs to be taught, discussed, documented. We shall find the best example, where it was least to be expected, in Hitler's pretentious and (as we think) presumptuous war-cry about the *Herrenvolk*. This theory of racial purity and predominance was first propounded by the Comte de Gobineau in *l'Essai sur l'Inégalité des Races humaines* (1853-5). He argued that the white races have degenerated because mongrelised, especially by the Semitic strain, and that the Germanic peoples have retained the most of their primitive vigour because they are the least contaminated. His thesis passed unnoticed, till revived by Charles Maurras in *l'Avenir de l'Intelligence* (1905) and Houston Stewart

Chamberlain in *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899), and thenceforth became a favourite controversy for ethnologists, as well as an inspiration to pan-German patriotism. Julian Huxley and A. C. Haddon consider the proposition to be worth their serious attention, or they would not have written *We Europeans*.

In fact, thoughts circulate from head to head like food in a wasps' nest, fusing individuality into national sentiment; and such is the infectiousness and violence of mass cerebration that any untitled citizen who hits upon the essential message may wield as much power as Alexander, Augustus, Charlemagne, Louis XIV, or Napoleon.

Even democratic governments have had to learn the same lesson. They must instruct, persuade and even cajole their own subjects. So powerful is public opinion, that they must not confine their attention to their own countries. They must persuade other nations to appreciate their power and approve their policy. So during the Four Years War propaganda became a recognised battle front. Since then, governments have made yet another discovery: they need not wait for the actual storm and stress of war. They must prepare the ground beforehand. Thus engaged on a policy of anticipation, they obviously cannot justify a quarrel which has not yet arisen; at least not in any open and comprehensive way. They can only create a friendly atmosphere, establish contacts, encourage intercourse, enhance their prestige in the educated consciousness of the neutral country. As literature and language are the most sociable and the least suspected

of interests, they have adopted these humanistic avenues of approach. And now, all unwittingly, they are stumbling upon a vast subterranean nexus of tendencies, anti-national, reconstructive, cosmopolitan, the coming birth of the new humanism, for which, like all governments of all ages, they are quite unprepared.

These questions will be considered in the unofficial light of a detached observer, as a new phase in the history of culture, a new problem in the troubled progress of our age. Internationalism is now a condition from which no country can escape, and it is therefore every humanist's duty to note the signs and tokens which help us to understand the phenomenon. For that reason it is important to remember that the diffusion or interchange of culture does not often succeed in influencing political relationships; not, at least, if we can believe the verdict of history.

To quote only the most recent example from our own time: we have done more in Italy than anywhere else to diffuse our language and literature. Yet no other belligerent country seems to have joined our enemies under less provocation or with less regret. On the other hand, Germany did her utmost to win the public sentiment of Greece, yet no nation has faced greater risks with less misgiving in order to defy her.

In fact, it may be assumed that culture and politics, though now so often associated, yet move on different planes. For instance, you might spend Sunday evening with your local bank manager discussing Arnold Bennett, over pipes and whisky. But if on Monday morning you called at his private office to suggest an addition to your

overdraft, you would find a very different personage, who had forgotten all about the novelist except his interest in money.

This circumstance, however, would hardly be accepted as an argument against reading modern novels, or discussing what you read.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ENGLISH TEACHER'S OPPORTUNITY ABROAD, AND ITS EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

IN the last chapter we noticed, amongst other things, that modern governments do not only have to rule, they also have to teach; but that national educators have gone too far. They have unwittingly trained the public to listen to other voices besides their own. They have infected their subjects with intellectual curiosity so that everybody wants to know as much about foreign countries as each one is capable of knowing about his own. All the more if the people happen to belong to a secondary nation whose civilisation partly depends on its more powerful neighbours. Consequently, as soon as a foreign power offers to teach its language and share its culture, they accord a welcome such as we here in England can hardly imagine.

Let us then consider what first impressed one of our pre-war teachers when he went abroad, say to Portugal, Italy, Egypt, Greece, the Balkan States, Hungary, Turkey, Iraq. We need not consider schoolmasters, because, with very few exceptions, schools are government institutions, with an official curriculum (which strictly limits the number of hours devoted to English), and a compulsory preponderance of native teachers, including the headmaster. So the Englishman's professional influence is conditioned and controlled by the system under which he works. His social opportunities will be discussed later.

So we must imagine that our teacher has arrived at an institute; or at an Anglophil society, originally founded to encourage international intercourse, but now developing a department for the serious study of English language and literature. This teaching centre will either be opening its doors for the first time, or it may be in its second year, or just possibly in its third; there are a very few yet older. So in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it is new, feeling its way, and everyone is still talking of its rapid growth. In some cities two to five thousand clamoured for entrance, in even the smallest towns the numbers rose rapidly, if not at once, to three figures.

Our teacher will next be told that even in university centres the vast majority of members are not students in the registrar's sense of the word. They are men and women of all ages and classes. In one place a taxi-driver, a hospital matron and a general sat in the same row; in another a policeman was ranged between a schoolboy and a retired bank manager, already bald and corpulent. But whatever their social and physical differences, they were practically all alike in that they had something else to do during the day. Thus the busiest hours at the institute were 7-9 p.m.

Our teacher may have been specially selected as a linguist, but more probably his subject was literature, art or history, and on appointment he had been told that these attainments would certainly be useful, but for the first year or so he would principally be required to teach his own language. He would soon see why. Of the unexpectedly large attendance, by far the greater majority (perhaps 80-90 per cent) were quite ignorant of English;

or if indeed they protested that they had any such knowledge, they had to be taught as if they had none. For the time being, the institute or department was practically a school of languages, or rather of one language.

Some senior member of the staff, or some ubiquitous member of the British colony, always eloquent on other people's affairs and silent on his own, would explain that this educational one-sidedness was only a beginning. The institute would soon expand and embrace all aspects of culture. It could be pointed out to him that a very few centres already prepared university students for their final examination in the faculty of English, though admittedly a small number; and in all the other centres there were "advanced" classes on English literature and institutions. The inquirer might for the moment be satisfied, but he would soon find that the university classes left no elbow-room for the enthusiastic and original teacher. They were inevitably dominated by the academic calendar: possibly a little Old English, just probably a little Middle English, almost certainly an attenuated selection of texts from the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He might begin with zeal to initiate his pupils into the wisdom and artistry of our half-forgotten masterpieces, but he would soon find that texts can be studied and examinations passed by candidates resigned to learn a living language as if it were dead, and that even the Sorbonne seems to hail English culture as a grandiose excuse for pedantry. Assuredly neither our language nor our literature would travel far in company with the local university.

Besides, very few institutes, as yet, collaborate with the

local university. Then what about those other classes of "advanced" English, attended by the men and women of culture who have already mastered our language because they have acquired a taste for our humanism? The answer depends on the town in which the inquirer works, but unless he is unusually fortunate, he may indeed chance upon a few bright spirits interested in some aspect of comparative literature, but the bulk of his audiences will be quite different. It would need a Theophrastus, an Earle, or a La Bruyère to portray the essential quality of those who love to listen. One does not know whence they come, whither they wend, or what they do. But they can be relied on to appear at every concert, classical drama or academic function open to the public. At Paris they like Corneille, at London the lectures at the National Gallery and British Academy, at Rome and Florence the opera, at Cairo, Athens and Bucharest the cultural classes at the institutes. They are middle-aged, they seem to listen best with closed eyes, at the end they do not applaud loudly.

So for all intents and purposes an institute was little more than a language school, and before our lecturer had been many months on its staff he would also discover that very few of these hundreds or thousands of learners cared for more than a practical working knowledge of the language. The typical attendant had no intention of studying our literature, philosophy, art, or technology. Some were hoping to qualify for a clerkship in the Civil Service, others to gain promotion in the office or hotel they served, others, again, wanted to improve their private businesses with England or the States, or with travellers

who flood the country in the tourist season. Yet others were taking advantage of a cheap opportunity, since the knowledge of a foreign language is always useful. Some were simply killing time. In certain centres Jews were especially numerous and assiduous, because they expected a persecution, and were preparing to emigrate westward; so much so, that in Rumania humorists used to ask "Are you Aryan, or are you learning English?" All were thinking of their own personal advantage, not of contact with British influence. There are, of course, a few exceptions to this generalisation, but very few.

Let us assume that our instructor is not so limited in outlook. He is not only wondering how to better himself but also how to better his country. If so, he begins to ask whether this expenditure of time and money really serves a national purpose. There may be many other motives for learning a foreign language. Before the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 all German officers learnt French, and by the turn of the century they were all learning English. A little later the Japanese began to learn our language in vastly increased numbers, and by and by they were capturing the textile trade in India. And even supposing that linguistic studies were not so politically profitable, was it advisable to appropriate British money so that un-British hotel managers, shopkeepers, bank clerks and taxi-drivers could do business more briskly with American and English travellers, and perhaps develop their territory into that ambush of speculation and subservience, a *tourist country*? Even as regards international commerce, every reputable business house has always been provided with a special staff of polyglot

translators and correspondents engaged in handling the overseas trade. Does it therefore follow that British sales-lists would be scanned more eagerly, if it was unnecessary to render them into the language of the average customer? Were foreigners likely to flock to our country in greater numbers just because they had acquired (chiefly at our expense) a superficial knowledge of colloquial English? Finally, would not the overcrowding of an institute multiply the number of teachers while lowering the standard of teaching?

If the newcomer posed these disconcerting questions among his colleagues, and other more authoritative compatriots, he would probably meet with evasive replies. He would find that educational propaganda was so new and had developed with such breathless rapidity, that few if any had been able to look ahead. Consequently, it had been accepted as an axiom that the wider the English language were diffused, the better for British prestige. It was a resounding proof of our popularity. Here and there a dissenting voice would be heard with the tentative suggestion that admission should be limited to those specially qualified for advanced study, either by previous training or leisured circumstances. The more practically minded would point out that much money would thereby be saved. An elementary language-class must be small—twenty-five the outside limit—so if each member received three hours' instruction per week, the institute would have to salary one teacher for every hundred pupils. On the other hand, a class on literature, art, history, or institutions need be limited only by the capacity of the largest lecture-hall.

Very likely our inquirer will conclude that this last solution is the best. Linguistics should be studied only as an initiation—a password and pass-grip to the freemasonry of English culture. By this means the interests of both parties will be served. Once give an intelligent and educated foreigner a deep if narrow glimpse into our humour and humanity, our sense of beauty and thirst for truth, our practical wisdom, tolerance and artistic craftsmanship, and he would be pro-British for the rest of his life. There are plenty of ways of restricting admission, and consequently only a few would attain to the vision, but a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Thus the teaching staff would be less and less preoccupied with grammar, vocabulary, phonetics and translation, and more and more with “the best which has been thought and written”; at least as far as English literature was concerned.

Such generalisations always win a hearing because they are based on familiar and accredited phrases, not unlike catchwords. But they may be specious rather than sound. So our teacher will want to test them by the best evidence available. Since the problem is without precedent both for him and his advisers, he will begin by referring to his own past experiences in England. After all, culture is to a large extent international, and what is happening in one country may throw light on what ought to happen in another. So he recalls that when he was an undergraduate, there were two distinct, in fact divergent, tendencies in academic life. In the first place, a university was an institution dedicated to the trusteeship of knowledge. All kinds of learning, however remote and recondite, were

tended and preserved. It was someone's business to inherit every piece of true work achieved by our ancestors, and to hand on the legacy to the next generation, purified and perfected. One never knows when this stewardship may prove to be well worth while; by-ways not unfrequently become high-ways. But, in the second place, he has observed that trusteeship is not the only function of a university. In most centres the majority were not interested in arts, but in some branch of practical or applied science which looked to the future and ministered to the material or physical needs of mankind, or at any rate led to action. The rise and growth of the London School of Economics is an example full of significance; and he must have noted how many brilliant wranglers almost at once discarded pure mathematics and made a reputation at the Bar.

Even among arts students the most intelligent and energetic did not seem resigned to absorb the wit, wisdom and expressiveness of the Past. They were not really at home in the old-fashioned values. These studies leave too many questions unanswered. All the time youth is (or ought to be) itching to know more about its own world, of which the greatest stylists had not an inkling, and to play its part therein.

The study of literature no longer means as much as it used to, even fifty years ago. It is still a cult in the schools, and consequently in the universities, and rightly so; we must not forget the duties of trusteeship, or that other duty to humanise the training of the young and educate their taste. But any experienced examiner in a faculty of English will tell you what percentage of candidates for

the B.A. have any real feeling or talent for their chosen subject. There would be barely enough to save Sodom and Gomorrha from destruction. Apart from professional students, the more humanistically minded, whatever their calling, return again and again to their classics. They do so in order to enjoy the personality of the writers—their earnestness, piety, imagination, flexibility of intelligence, wit, humour, pathos, or craftsmanship. They are all the more willing to do so, because these authors are our ancestors, honoured names among the pioneers of our civilisation; and besides, some few amateurs are genuinely interested in the phases through which English thought has passed. But, except for their allotted moments of escapism, they all prefer those very few classics which help us to control our social and mechanistic environment. Nor do the majority take this trouble with foreign authors.

It is only natural. If we do not find a sense of intimate reality in our national masterpieces, we are not likely to find it in some other unfamiliar language. Yet that is more or less what we invite the foreigner to do, when we celebrate the name of England and base our appeal on lectures about our famous writers. We forget that other nations are passing through the same phase as we are, possessed by the same curiosities and preoccupations. Now and then they will crowd in hundreds to hear some particular speaker because he is the latest sensation (as we should do) or because he is discoursing on Shakespeare, the ever fashionable and inexhaustible subject (also as we should do). But unless the audience or the occasion is specialised, their thoughts are elsewhere.

Thus, to return at last to the impressions of our newly

arrived lecturer, we must unfortunately assume that he is faced with a dilemma. His language and literature classes seem alike doomed to partial failure for opposite reasons: the language classes because learners are too numerous and too zealously intent on satisfying their urgent personal needs; the literature classes because learners are too few and not intent on satisfying any personal needs whatever.

What then should the teacher do? He should be as good as his word. At some inaugural meeting, at some lunch or tea given in his honour, he has certainly been called on to make a speech and almost as certainly he has ended his "few well-chosen words" with the assurance that he has come not only to teach but also to learn. If, then, he clears his mind of academic prepossessions and approaches his task in a receptive mood, he will find many new facts, some discouraging and others encouraging. In the first place, he will discover that his problem is complicated by a prejudice which Englishmen often overlook. These nationalities are so misguided on the subject of British perfections that they do not wish to be anglicised. They have all, especially the younger and more newly created, an intense pride in their own culture which derives (so they like to say) from some ancient source. They have indeed a laudable curiosity in our customs and conduct, but they certainly will not adopt them, nor would their government tolerate such peaceful penetration. In any case they would not merge their national identity in an imported civilisation. He will learn, in the second place, that his pupils, whether students of language or literature, really consider them-

selves to be much cleverer and more enlightened than he is, despite courteous assurances to the contrary. In the third place, he will acquire the habit of remembering that his subject is not the only thing that his pupils have to learn; they have their own professional preoccupations and avocations; they come to the institute for a single selfish purpose.

Yet the careful observer may be able to discern a magnificent opportunity. His pupils, to be numbered by the hundred, though divided in their private aims, are united in one common though inarticulate desire. Well aware that their own language (despite its alleged expressiveness) is inadequate for modern cosmopolitanism, they are vaguely conscious that they need a second auxiliary world-language.

This international necessity has hardly begun to penetrate the British consciousness, for the simple reason that we have never felt the need for it. The world-language is already here and in the United States, and spreads farther afield with each new enterprise emanating from those two cosmopolitan commonwealths. It is only when one mixes with other nations that one recognises its power and ubiquity and feels instinctively, as do most foreigners, that the means for cosmopolitan intercourse are ready to hand.

Their intuition is certainly not at fault. At the present moment between six and seven hundred millions use English either as their native language, or as the language of government and commerce. For instance, any intelligent peasant in, say, the north of the Hebrides or of Alaska, and in the south of India or Uruguay, who dreams

of rising to the status of a business or government official, would begin by perfecting his English rather than French, German, Italian or Spanish. Our nearest competitor is Chinese with a paltry four hundred and fifty millions; the rest—nowhere.

Such was the situation before the war of 1939. At the close of hostilities the problem will be more complicated. In the eyes of the world, and especially of Europe, England will no longer be one nation among others competing for cultural prestige. She will be the dominating force in international politics, the professed and confessed arbiter of liberty. This hegemony will, of course, enormously enhance our influence, but not our popularity. It is a matter of common experience that individuals welcome the helping hand in their hour of need, but they do not enjoy being assisted in their hour of humiliation; the sense of inferiority rankles; and nations are composed of individuals. Besides, all public movements are apt to culminate in a reaction. In England the triumph of our war effort will almost certainly end in a change of ministry (despite precautions), and on the continent it will end in a change of sentiment. Faces will be turned in the other direction. In the next place, the arbiter of liberty will have to impose certain restrictions on the group of liberated nations, some scheme of unified defence, with the curtailment of local armaments, some conformity to a world peace policy. These impositions will be accepted because inevitable, but in revenge the allied nationalities will become more national than ever. They may have to recognise the British Empire as a disciplinarian in disguise, but not as an instructor

undisguised. So if they need our language it will not be as a cultured alternative to their own, but as a business-like amplification, a *lingua franca*; much as a calligrapher might recognise the advantages of an office typewriter.

For all these reasons it seems likely that an English institute, at the outset of its career, should begin by developing linguistic cosmopolitanism. This obligation is not only a magnificent opportunity, but also an overwhelming responsibility, involving, possibly, a change of heart. Does not a touch of arrogance underlie our apparently generous offer to teach other nations our language? If so, our instructor must begin by learning submergence in the comity of nations. He is to diffuse not so much English but the language which the English originated.

## CHAPTER III

### THE LANGUAGE AND HUMANISM OF THE FUTURE

It has been suggested that English must be taught as a world-language. This adaptation need not imply any fundamental revolution in teaching methods, but it does involve a change of emphasis. For instance, the teacher will have to keep before him the words most useful for cosmopolitan intercourse; he will have to draw his examples from the phraseology of social administration and international commerce. When he dwells on the more subjective aspects of language, he will insist upon the sentiments and sensations shared alike by all nations, not on English manners and mannerisms, still less on the niceties of style in English prose and poetry. However reluctantly, we shall have to consent to simplify our spelling, since our language will be surrendered to the service of mankind. We cannot assume that foreigners will continue to respect it as a private possession, associated with a single nation's eccentricity and conservatism.

These provisions, of course, will apply to the routine instruction, not to the few special classes held for students with a scholarly interest in English for its own sake.

The more technical problems before the linguist will be noticed in chapter v, but one more general consequence may be considered here. The study of a world-language involves mass instruction; everybody who is anybody must learn it. So an institute should contemplate no

other restrictions than those imposed by housing accommodation and the Treasury grant. Such vulgarisation need not involve vulgarity. Classes can be graded and a special corner reserved for experts and exquisites; a large staff can be just as efficient as a small one. It means, however, that some very good teachers, trained in the mysteries of phonetic laboratories and the evolution of voice-production, will have to forgo, or rather postpone, their dream of a small and very select centre for research and experimentation. They have gone abroad to serve the world, not an English academic institution. Is it too much to ask young men to resign the insularity which nowadays is next door to insolence, and to disclaim the position of linguistic legislators imparting a ritual of which they alone, by right of birth, know the interpretation? In return they can help England to lead and inspire a world-wide collaboration, while appearing to sacrifice her pre-eminence for the common good.

Is then cultural propaganda to be reduced to the study of phraseology and pronunciation? By no means. Cosmopolitan linguistics should rest on cosmopolitan ideas. A considerable proportion of learners will want to think as well as to talk. It has already been urged that a specialised study of English literature cannot appeal to the most progressive section of a community, all the more (it should now be added) because the new or remodelled nationalities, like the old established, have their own ideas about humanism. Some of them claim continuity with Greek or Roman culture, but all of them are producing prose and poetry, quite unclassical, but suited to twentieth-century sentiments. Nor do they

want to learn from England how to write. They read translations of Dickens, Kipling, Shaw, Galsworthy, and less frequently Conan Doyle and Wells, because these authors offer them portraits of English types which are clear-cut, consistent, and intelligible and are therefore supposed to be true. Such characterisation satisfies curiosity and tickles their sense of comedy. Foreigners also affect an interest in Shakespeare, because his plays are so frequently staged with great effect. All over the world he seems to give more scope to the talents of actors than any modern playwright can (Oscar Wilde is *proxime accessit*). But with that one illustrious exception, it is to be noticed that the authors who arouse interest for their own sake are the most modern. In fact, whenever a class at any institute is asked what period of literature it would like to study, the answer is almost certain to be "the twentieth century; preferably the novels". That is to say, contemporary taste verges towards the least established and least literary reputations, but those which are closest in touch with the life of our own times, which turn your gaze forward, not backward. If books are read from choice, it is not for their art, but for their actuality; because they are the nearest approach to the problems of the future.

Should not that approach be rendered broader and more direct? Of course a few may take a scholar's interest in the historical development of our literature, just as a few in this country take a scholar's interest about schools and styles in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, and their scholarship should be encouraged. Of course a yet larger number are genuinely interested in British constitu-

tionalism, our economic and social sciences, and that "ordered freedom, justice and security" for which we are ready to go to war. It need not be added that such curiosity also should be satisfied as fully as the local governments permit. Yet even this specialisation proceeds from a wider, more practical, urge: the twentieth-century preoccupation with progress and reconstruction, with individual and social betterment, with self-expression through mutual service. Even if the student begins by learning England's lesson, he hopes to see how far it can be applied to his own country. But if our emissaries are as ready to learn as to teach, they will find again and again that the majority would rather not spend time over such preliminaries. They want at once to know as much as they can about the possibilities and potentialities of the New World which their nation has entered; even though they hardly now expect that Englishmen can enlighten them.

It should be the duty of every English institute to take that cosmopolitan view of culture, and to concentrate its educational policy on what one might term the *New Humanism*.

Here we touch on a problem too big to be fully discussed or completely ignored. For unless the suggestion of world-culture is to be dismissed without inspection as a string of empty words, we must give some practical hint of its plan. For that purpose we must very briefly consider what humanism means and why it has changed its function.

The word *humanist* was coined early in the seventeenth century to denote a student of human as opposed to

theological subjects. Such a study could not make much progress till it was recognised that man is largely responsible for what happens to him on earth, and that therefore he should acquire practical and theoretical knowledge in order to better his existence. But it is one of the most disconcerting traits of human nature that we rarely think of the right thing at the first trial, and even more rarely recognise our mistakes, till we have not only suffered for our perversity, but discovered at what point our knowledge stumbled. Thus a history of culture is really a history of errors corrected; and progress depends on realising the pitfalls which men unwittingly devise for themselves and others. These well-intentioned blunders were, and still are, due to one-sidedness, because so many people had and have a sense of facts, but not a sense of human nature. They lack flexibility of intelligence, the discernment which comes from fellow-feeling, spiritual insight, and the lucidity of expression which requires lucidity of thought. These are the qualities which make a humanist; and as they were all so richly exemplified in the classics rediscovered at the Renaissance, humanism was gradually associated with the study of Greek and Latin literature.

Meanwhile, from the seventeenth century onwards, scientific discoveries and inventions had steadily improved man's idea of himself and his universe, supplying new and more practical data for progress, till by 1870 the world had become scientifically minded; even those inhabitants of it who had never studied science. At the same time humanism, in the old-fashioned sense of the word, began more rapidly to lose its hold.

Every educationalist will sooner or later find himself called upon to vote for or against the decline of literature and art, and he will not be able to make up his mind, unless he has considered whether science can be trusted to stand alone. What is the value for the ordinary man of technology, mechanisation, physics, and the study of phenomena for their own sake? The answer is too obvious to need explaining. It is enough to say that, within a few generations, we have given ourselves the means, both theoretically and practically, of rectifying all the disabilities and defects under which the human race suffers—if only we have the mind to apply them. Science has so completely revolutionised both civilisation and culture that the older humanistic influences appear to be superseded.

The bare mention of such a possibility proves that literature is more needed than ever, but on condition that it is cultivated not as a corrective to science but as a compensation. It is to be noticed, in the first place, that a science, just because it deals in primary and elemental facts, is indifferent to individual diversity; it insists on facts and their classification; that means on what is true for everybody, on appearances which are the same for all observers (if they have the means for observation). Art, on the other hand, is impossible without fresh aspects, original points of view, the force of atmosphere and style, in fact, the personality of the artist, in no two cases alike, and thus keeps the observer in touch with the mysterious variations of human nature. For instance, the man of science tells us that sound, heat and light are phenomena intelligible under the same mathematical formula; and

we are grateful for the insight; it clears up certain perplexities. But any scientific analysis, no matter how penetrating, leaves unexplored the individual experiences of light, heat and sound, for instance, the two worlds revealed in one of Turner's sunsets and one of Beethoven's symphonies. To know that the centre of the Milky Way system is 180,000 million million miles from the sun merely leaves us with a profound respect for mathematical calculations, unless we ask Milton, Shelley, Goethe, Tennyson, Renan, Kierkegaard or Thomas Hardy to help us. The one kind of knowledge compensates the other.

The empiricist will deny that art is knowledge. He will say that musicians, painters, and especially poets, differ from scientists, in that they live on dreams. In reality both orders live on a reasoned body of knowledge; in the case of science a body of facts; in the case of poetry and creative prose a body of abstractions which can afterwards be registered as facts. The abstractions are such ideas as justice, heroism, loving-kindness, reverence, beauty, as coloured and substantiated by the individual's experience; the registration is effected in epics, dramas, lyrics, novels and essays. Thus registered, the abstractions become facts, because they reveal modes of conduct—the things which people actually do and think—but conduct at its best and rarest.

Thus humanism, now as always, means illumination, and its present function is to illuminate science. It should serve as a crucible through which all knowledge is passed and those values extracted which are true to man's highest nature and most permanent interests. In the first place, its criticism and interpretation will give a more human—

often spiritual—significance to the findings of the laboratory, dissecting-room and observatory. In the next place, it will help to direct research towards the best interests of the human race. It is seldom realised that inventions do not as a rule inconsequentially happen. They generally follow some call from the world 'outside. The age is conscious of a want, and men of inventive genius try to supply it, as if by a law of nature, inspired by the movement of events around them. Now and then the policy of some government takes the place of public opinion, occasionally with disastrous consequences, for science knows more ways of killing men than killing the tsetse fly. Never was there more need of a disciplined social conscience, cosmopolitan in its sympathies, scientific in its interests.

To borrow the illustration of the Epicurean philosophers, the mind is a receptacle into which learning and experience are poured. The content will be vitiated unless the vessel is constantly cleansed. Such is the function of humanism. Or, in the words of Sir Arthur Eddington: "Whatever we have to apprehend must be apprehended in a way for which our intellectual equipment has made provision."

The preceding paragraphs are not a digression. It was necessary to show why traditional humanism must transcend tradition. It is the function of culture to criticise civilisation, and the one must keep pace with the other. It is outside the scope of this essay to discuss what literature is affiliated to science, and obviously the applications of the idea must be left to the enterprising teacher, guided by experience. The only doubt is whether

there are yet many such neo-humanists, capable of feeling their way between the two courses, equally interested in both. The older educationalists, unfamiliar with the prospect, would probably deny that two-sided teachers can be found and would at once dismiss the proposition as quite impracticable; the manipulators of official routine, if consulted, would even more probably dismiss it as new. So the alliance of literature and science may have to wait for at least another generation. Nevertheless there is already a large number of young men and women who have studied poetry, novels, philosophy and history in the spirit of the twentieth century, and have also glimpsed the approach to science through the many popular essays and treatises by Julian Huxley, J. B. S. Haldane, Crowther, Levy, Sir Charles Sherrington and Wells. Deep down in their consciousness there is a sense of scientific possibilities, and of literary idealisms, though they have not been taught to fuse the two tendencies.

That is the real obstacle. We have all been encouraged at school and college to take sides; to be either *pro-literary* or *pro-scientific*. So it is difficult to believe that the two kinds of learning ought to be partners, each perfecting the other. It is particularly difficult in the older countries which have enjoyed a continuity of culture, dating from the Renaissance. There are so many vested interests, so many honest partialities for this or that study, so many young people who realise that the only chance of an intellectual career lies in the direction of specialisation. But the teacher in an institute abroad has a magnificent opportunity. Even if the state education is as hidebound,

pedantic, and stereotyped as the medieval system, the English implantation stands apart. It is an experiment in intellectualism, an adventure, a home of new experiences, a release from the mental adjustments and restraints of business life.

Of course it will be objected that most foreigners come to an institute solely to learn the language. Such no doubt is at first their chief object. But language belongs to both camps. In order to use words, we have to know something about the ideas to which they apply. Phraseology and nomenclature vary according to the theme, in fact, each function and interest has its own terms and constructions. Without specialising in technicalities, the language-learner ought to be able to move easily among different topics, or after all his toil and trouble he remains half dumb. His interests must be as catholic as his vocabulary. Surely a percentage are sufficiently awake to realise when they have stumbled upon a rich vein of thought and discussion.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ENGLISH TEACHER'S OPPORTUNITY ABROAD, AND ITS SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

IN the last chapter it was suggested that the teacher who goes abroad should be prepared to create a world-language and a world-culture. So Herculean a task might be expected to absorb all his time and energy. He would have to lead the life of a retired scholar, pale-faced, heavy-eyed and uncouth. Perhaps that is the reason why some folk still maintain that a teacher should be only a teacher, and see no more of life than is necessary for the good of his soul.

It need not be added that in such places a great opportunity would be missed. Learning is, or ought to be, the most sociable of pursuits. Activity within the classroom leads on to activity without; and our instructors should be expected and encouraged to become popular rather than pedagogic.

Let us, then, suppose that the representatives of British culture rank more or less with the representatives of British government and commerce. In that case the institute staff finds itself faced with yet more problems of great difficulty—an enhanced importance which involves enhanced responsibility. It must produce a diversity of social and athletic accomplishments. Nor are goodwill and talent enough. Every employed Englishman abroad, as soon as he comes out of his shell, is under the microscope, especially in the English colony.

His mere presence is a challenge to the older residents, all the more because (as Dibelius noted in his study of our national character) every true Englishman feels in his bones the need to be influential. He or she must be public spirited if not a public character. So the lecturer sent out from England and paid to join this band of patriots soon finds that the welcome extended to a fellow-worker is not altogether unmixed with jealousy and suspicion. He has to cultivate the arts which Lord Chesterfield tried so hard to impress upon his son: the faculty of always pleasing others by seeming pleased himself.

The professional patriots at the legation and consulate are likely to be the hardest to please, since they are the official guardians of British prestige, and the representatives of British society. Nor is their vigilant criticism without justification. The intelligent lecturer who mixes with his pupils and their friends will soon find that in Horace's phrase he is tiptoeing on a thin crust of lava, flames lurking below. The pitfalls vary with the town and nation in which he is active. He may be seen fraternising with political suspects; or taking too much interest in some group not well seen by the government (for instance, in some countries, the Jews); in an unguarded moment, across some convivial dinner table, he may confess to sympathy with socialism. Perhaps in some transient moment of fatigue or boredom he may lose patience with someone of temporary or permanent importance. These are lapses to which all humanity is liable, nor are they likely to culminate in an "incident". On the other hand, they do not tend to simplify and

lubricate diplomatic relationships, and thus an institute may well become a source of invisible embarrassment. Any newcomer, with the best intentions, may blunder through unwariness.

The British Mission must in duty bound feel its official responsibility; nor could anyone question the wisdom of its interference. But since it must act on second-hand evidence, a great deal depends on preconceived opinions, and personal impressions of the personage delated. That personage should also be warned that professional reputations abroad are not made exactly as at home. In England, a schoolmaster or lecturer relies chiefly on his academic reputation, whether in brains or brawn. This record will always stand him in good stead. In these overseas centres very few people know anything whatever about the intellectual and athletic life of their mother-country. They judge a man on his manners and presentability. So unless our teacher is prepared to take refuge in seclusion and self-effacement, he had better cultivate the reputation of "a thoroughly good fellow". Much is forgiven to a *persona grata*.

This qualification is a gift of the gods. But like other gifts from that source, it is bestowed with a rather ironical display of generosity. Popularity has been known to unsettle the heads of the most cautious and self-disciplined, and in the case of teachers the boon is more than usually deceptive. This may at first sight appear to be a paradox, since a schoolmaster or lecturer is supposedly dedicated to a profession high above the vulgar ambitions of the philistine. But on second thoughts, it should be remembered that if the pursuit of knowledge induces

humility its inculcation does not. The man who instructs must for the greater part of each day be professionally in the right; to admit error or ignorance, even to himself, is to admit incompetence. Besides, the business of canalising other people's thoughts is a dangerously flattering mode of self-expression. If some teachers are rather awestruck at the responsibility, the greater number cannot do without it. In certain of our most devoted educators there is a streak of megalomania—an instinct to impose one's own personality—and they have become schoolmasters and lecturers because that career happened to offer the easiest outlet. At any rate some of the younger scholars who go abroad are touched with this superiority complex, and they find themselves to be thereby exceptionally blessed and cursed. Blessed, because their enthusiasm and confidence make a very good impression in this new unexplored arena, full of half-formed projects and unsettled plans; cursed, because they have not been trained or prepared to take the lead and rely on their own judgment.

For in England education is something of a hierarchy. A young teacher begins at the foot of the ladder; there are many seniors on the higher rungs; the initiate has to work his way up to a position of genuine authority. For many years he is under continual though very unobtrusive supervision. Even where he has reached the headship of his department he has to consent to a discipline very salutary to the servants of knowledge. Though the courses are regulated, a spirit of discussion and criticism is encouraged within those limits. In some subjects, for instance Economics, any instruction short of a set lecture

is apt to develop into a medieval disputation. Even when handling the most formalised subjects, based on accredited data, it is not enough to know one's facts better than one's pupils do. The teacher has to explain or rather defend his opinions against the budding sceptic and over-zealous inquirer. Obviously a young teacher initiated into this atmosphere takes heed lest he should fall. There is another reason. He is likely to lead a quiet life, either in the country surroundings of a boarding school, or in one of the less pretentious districts of a provincial university town, his most familiar associates being people like himself, members of the same common-room.

Life abroad may be expected to be quite different. The emissary joins an institute which has only just begun to evolve, and is still feeling its way. Experiments have to be made, every month, every week, almost every day. Nobody knows for certain what is best. If he is enterprising and enthusiastic, and can convince others of his ability, he will soon be trusted, and encouraged to follow his bent. He persuades himself that he has a free hand. Thus outside the classroom he finds no difficulty in believing in himself. Within the classroom it is even easier. His pupils may or may not consider themselves to be the most refined or intelligent in the town, quite above this young foreigner. But even the most opinionated will not venture to question his omniscience in his own language. They will hang on his lips. Under these flattering if delusive circumstances, it is difficult for him to remember the humility of his apprenticeship; it is fatally easy to persuade himself that he has shed his youthful inhibitions and is at last realising his quality.

So the overseas teaching service is likely to play on any peculiar weaknesses lurking in the academic temperament, especially if the teacher takes our advice and mixes in society. In most foreign towns the English colony is divided into various sets usually grouped respectively round the embassy or legation, the consulate, the Church, and the heads of English businesses; and then beyond the pale what Milton would call "the promiscuous crowd", another variously assorted groupment which professes contentment with its obscurity, but would commit all the crimes in the Decalogue to gain admittance to one of the privileged circles. There are, of course, honourable exceptions, who fear boredom more than they desire distinction, but they are the exceptions which prove the rule. Our newcomer, being a climber, must of course associate with the government class. If he is adaptable and conversational, his progress should not be slow. There are plenty of young men, well placed, with money and energy to burn, who need excitement and release after the day's routine—a merry meeting at the best bars or cafés, a theatre supper, a bottle-party—and will welcome a bright companion. As the autumn season begins with its round of hospitalities, hostesses a little tired of the sameness of their set will welcome an accredited stranger, while he is still a novelty. His reputation may even spread beyond the colony.

The reader has already discerned the possible disadvantages of this progress. A presentable scholar discovers that he is not only a successful teacher, but a successful "man about town"—at least, so he thinks.

In many cases this discovery merely adds to the needful sense of confidence. But in some others it inhibits the yet more needful habit of self-criticism. The lecturer who might otherwise have worked steadily and quietly, as at home, adjusted to his small niche in a big machine, now loses his head, and becomes a source of friction and ill-considered actions.

Besides, he is sure to have overlooked one cause of his success. The average social group exists, of course, for conversation; being average, it is unable to discuss things, but is never tired of discussing persons; and since its neighbours' virtues are so well known, the really interesting talk bickers round their defects. Accordingly, the newcomer is especially welcome because he has not yet had time to form his own judgments on others; he is a listener; a fresh receptacle for the time-worn grievances and strictures, by which some folks seem anxious to maintain their own self-esteem. But he is even more welcome because the moment the door is shut on his back, he is still among them. They have been waiting for this opportunity. Absent in body but present in spirit he becomes himself the most engrossing of themes, a new subject for criticism.

For all these reasons, his social success will probably not be lasting, unless its inception was gradual and unobtrusive. The next newcomer takes his place. As the invitations decrease, the glitter of this life falls away like a garment, and he is left face to face with the laborious monotony of his profession. For such is the lot of every teacher not wholeheartedly devoted to the accumulation and interpretation of knowledge—the only *nostrum* for

the microbe of self-importance—especially in a foreign country.

This hint of exile will probably be dismissed by the reader because there is a widespread opinion that European countries are more interesting than England, and that a person who resides abroad lives more intensely and broad-mindedly than one who stays at home. But residence is a different matter from tourism, for we change our skies more easily than our hearts. It must be remembered that our emissary will not, unless he is exceptionally lucky, be living in Paris, Rome, Florence, Munich, Dresden, or Budapest; nor wandering about Europe as an artist or author, the occasional guest at legations, picking up casual acquaintances with Spanish peasants, or fishermen at Paimpol. He will probably be stationed in the capital or perhaps in a provincial town of one of the smaller nations, where everybody and everything might be so much better. In England we casually assume that most of our blessings are commonplaces, not privileges. One must live abroad to realise for the first time what it means to have been a citizen of the world's leading nation, where nearly everybody has some sense of public welfare and the will to further its progress. If our exile preserves his sense of proportion, he will one day wake up and discover that he is beginning to resemble those around him, and he will wish to leave.

It cannot be too often repeated that this picture is not outlined in order to discredit service abroad, but in order to emphasise the difficulties and consequently the qualifications needed. Fortunately youth is not easily discouraged

when there is the prospect of new experiences, amounting to adventure. This proviso must be particularly borne in mind when we approach the next and last consideration. The newcomer to a foreign centre will notice that the residential English are fond of criticising not only each other, but the national population among whom they make their living. He will be told how they haggle, procrastinate, temporise, bluff, bluster and pose.—*all so un-English!* By and by he will be unable to hide from himself the conviction that the settlers are many of them becoming very much like the un-English they censure. They are just as unscrupulous, dilatory, inefficient, selfish and under-hand. In fact, to use their own ungracious phrase, some of them have *gone native*. Contrary to current opinion this tendency is a very real danger in English life abroad. A prominent journalist and thinker, an authority on wine, as well as on Plato and politics, once remarked in conversation: "If I followed my personal inclination, I should leave England, own a vineyard in the south of France, cultivate my own vintages, and lead the life of a *méridional*. But I know that I shall never bring myself to do it, because leaving England would mean cutting myself adrift. There is something in this country, some spiritual influence, which keeps you up to the mark. Cut the painter, and you never know where you may drift." This sentiment is not confined to England. Maurice Barrès was equally convinced that the "regionalism of France", rich in local customs, traditions and habits of thought, gives to each of her children the moral tendencies which will never fail them; and in 1897 he published *Les Déracinés* to show how a young man

uprooted out of this spiritual soil, and guided only by abstract persuasions and ambitions, runs the risk of becoming morbid, dangerous or even criminal.

Many, however, who live abroad—for instance, the Kiplingesque hero—remain true to their English allegiance. They do not cut themselves adrift; on the contrary, they cling too closely to their English customs and prejudices, and thereby earn the reputation of being inadaptable. But some others, frequently the so-called intellectuals, go to the opposite extreme. They have been so long in revolt against British philistinism and conventionality, they feel so competent to be a law unto themselves, so proud of their intellectual independence, that they give as much rein to their conduct as to their thoughts. Even in this mood, a large number can be trusted to guide themselves by the light of common-sense. Some others lose the sense of rightness with the habit of self-criticism. Having once escaped from the English atmosphere, it is astonishing to note the culpable laxities into which they may drift. Sometimes the quietest and best mannered become the most unaccountable. The most usual failing, and sometimes the cause of the others, is liable to be alcoholic. One would not expect professional teachers, registrars, or secretaries to be addicted to this form of relaxation, all the more insidious because permissible. Nor do they, as a class, indulge even to that extent. At the same time it must be remembered that the greater part of the teacher's work is usually crowded into the late hours of the afternoon, and early evening, when the worker is no longer fresh, and as one class succeeds another with their passive expressions, he continues to stand or stroll in front of the blackboard, explaining,

listening, correcting in the unventilated atmosphere, laden with chalk dust. No wonder his throat becomes dry, and his thoughts wander involuntarily to some brightly lit bar or café, where he will enjoy congenial company and a sense of restored vitality. But in those carefree surroundings the inexperienced cosmopolitan also becomes an artist in Ozo, Slivovitch, Raki, Mastica, Pernot, amer picon, Vodka, Manhattans, pink gin, and displays his knowledge of the world through his knowledge of ante-prandials. When Bacchus is honoured as the god of conviviality, the deities of thrift and perseverance are apt to withdraw in jealous anger.

Is then this life a case of living dangerously, or, as a corrective, living guardedly? Neither. The former process would render our emissary a nuisance, the latter would render him a bore. It is a case of living intellectually. A former Chancellor of England, no mere book-worm, remarked in 1625: "A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds; therefore let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other." In other words, he should devote himself to those pursuits which stimulate and store energy instead of wasting it. We shall discuss in the next chapter the special interests and aptitudes which ought to qualify our teacher for his profession. At present it is enough to suggest that he should not let himself be absorbed in some hobby which has nothing to do with his working hours—for instance archaeology, international politics, poetic drama—nor, on the other hand, be too exclusively wrapped up in the fascinating business of teaching. Either of these absorptions may possibly lead to a sense of unfulfilment and consequent restlessness. If one be permitted to offer advice, he might be counselled to

remember that various learned societies at home are eagerly awaiting the kind of knowledge that he can collect. He has unique opportunities. He lives near the very heart of a foreign people, probably in some country which has not yet been adequately studied. He can observe their mentality, their sentiments, their traditions and folklore, their religious and social evolution, their ideas and ideologies, appetencies and aptitudes; or again their anthropology, vocalisms, verbal imagination and physiognomical peculiarities. The data he accumulates should be of value to such organisations as the Institute of Education, or the Royal Institute of International Affairs, as well as to his own reputation. These are of course only two out of many ways by which his researches might contribute to the culture of his age.

Having acquired cognate interests, there is yet one more difficulty to be faced. The teacher who studies and corrects the verbal articulation of his pupils had better not forget his own. Foreigners frequently complain that Englishmen are bad speakers. Very often they are blaming us for their own unfamiliarity with our language. But there does seem to be some justice in the criticism. As early as 1644, Milton, after his continental tour, remarked in *Of Education* that we Northerners "are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward". So it is probably an ingrained English habit to speak from the back of the throat with restraint, relying too much on the vocal chords, not opening the mouth widely nor manipulating it as the orifice through which the voice should be articulated—keeping a "stiff upper lip", labially as well as morally. This constriction is particularly regrettable because educated Englishmen,

when speaking naturally, do not give equal value to every syllable. Their pronunciation is rapid, clipped and abbreviated, relying much on intonation. In some of the commonest monosyllables the vowels are completely effaced. Besides, many of our countrymen are still afraid of betraying much interest or enthusiasm in what they say. They value the quality of self-possession so highly that they stand aloof from their subject. Speakers otherwise as different as Newman and Lord Curzon were noted for the calmness and informality of their delivery. Others, less experienced and skilful, satisfy themselves with studied monotony. For all these reasons an Englishman is bound to seem less intelligible than a well-trained French, Italian, German or American speaker. Yet there is no reason why we should accept inferiority. Sir Henry Irving or Ellen Terry could fill the biggest theatre with a seemingly half inaudible whisper which penetrated to the remotest nooks and corners of the house. Yet such elocution was due far less to an accident of genius than to a technique acquired through years of patient study and practice. Any teacher who hopes to capture the foreigner's ear should (in his own humble way) follow their example. Once upon a time the art of elocution was considered to be undignified, the perquisite of cranks and bogus professors, the histrionic resource of tub-orators and undenominational preachers who had nothing to say. Those who had never studied voice-production were particularly confident about its uselessness. Now it is recognised that the human voice is a delicate instrument of infinite charm and power; and there are plenty of institutions in which a natural speaker will learn as much in a week as he could teach himself in a year.

## CHAPTER V

### THE MAKINGS OF AN OVERSEAS TEACHING SERVICE: SOME COLLECTED SUGGESTIONS

WE have now formed some idea of the kind of teacher who should represent England in neutral countries. We have seen that he is no mere pedlar in colloquial English and business correspondence, nor again an instructor in the national idiosyncrasies of English composition, nor yet the interpreter of select passages and annotated editions of school classics. He has the honour of contributing towards a universal language and a cosmopolitan culture, both approached through English thought and language, and must moreover play the part of a public though unofficial character, with all the responsibilities involved. Where can such paragons be found? The answer is: Nowhere. The finished article does not exist, or, if at all, in negligible quantities. But the raw material can be produced and trained.

This assertion is not so platitudinous as it sounds, because up to the present there has been no certainty that the most suitable people would be attracted. The machinery of recruitment has not yet, it appears, been specially adapted to the purpose. The old approved methods are still in use.

It must never be forgotten that a young man just entering upon life is necessarily and rightly an egoist. If he does not engineer his own future, nobody else will do it for him. So the applicant is influenced by the reputation

of the service; by the dignity it confers, its recognition as a worthy institution, the prospects of an assured and not altogether unlucrative career. Take for instance the I.C.S. Many candidates are thinking of the influence and importance they will enjoy; their opportunities for travel, society, polo, and big game hunting; the high pay and substantial pension at the end. It is only gradually that the fascination of their duties grows upon them and they find a broader and straighter passage to India than E. M. Forster imagined. But the I.C.S. has no rivals for this type of man; it is that career or something less spacious and lucrative. On the other hand, the educational tree spreads out into a wide choice of branches, one about as profitable as another. A climber who has made good at the lower stages, at the solid rooted trunk of school and college examinations, soon becomes conscious of his individual attainments and looks round carefully at the branches above him, seeking where to place his talent most advantageously. However whimsical and individualistic their preferences, it nearly always happens that they choose to follow the line of learning they have begun to master, in the kind of institution they have admired since childhood, and can trust till old age.

Obviously men of this type, the flower of our educational system, will not come forward in crowds, except for a very special professorship. A few might be willing to spend two or three years abroad; but they are not likely to resign their partnership in England's intellectual life. To men of this kind, our much abused country means literary circles, the stimulating atmosphere of scholarly friendships, the daily contact of mind with mind, and

access to the knowledge and wisdom stored for centuries in our cities. Emigration for them means exile. Most of the applicants are likely to be those who cannot see their way clearly, who may, or may not, have good degrees, but find their progress inhibited by some inconspicuous defect, or by sheer ill luck; or again those genial and unaccountable personages who cannot fit into any system, but tour the continent in various capacities, as lecturers, photographers, agents, and generally leave behind them a trail of amusing and slightly scandalised gossip; or lastly those who go through life trying to get more out of it than they put into it, and in government services are known as experts in extracting grants, allowances, and compensations—veritable models of perseverance and ingenuity in the business of snatching perquisites.

Neither the best nor the worst have the kind of experience and knowledge adapted to an overseas teaching service. At the most, some few may already have had practice in teaching foreigners in the excellent classes held at the Polytechnic and City of London School; some more may have taught English to young Englishmen. If ever our country is to make the most of its opportunities abroad, it must first enlarge the educational system at home, and then improve the methods of recruitment.

It might seem that both expedients would prove futile, if, as already suggested, our schools and universities are too occupied with the pressing problems of education at home; in a word, too insular. But it is not here proposed to disturb or divert their functions, but to add to them.

Strange as it may sound to some ears, our scholastic and academic traditions have generally proved to be adaptable, when there was a genuine demand for adaptation. So if we want to lay the foundations of a world-language and culture based on our own, we must first create in the rising generation a desire to take part in the work.

The prospect will not appeal to everybody. A large number, presumably the majority, at school or college will continue to visualise the same careers as of old. But there has always been a percentage who would like to become teachers but have shrunk from the apparent disadvantages which might be summarised as *relegation*. The young man is apt to fear that the profession of teacher secludes him from the great issues of the world. At a school he will pass the greater part of his existence (so he thinks) in a routine which is too peaceful, amid scenery which is too healthy and attractive. At a college he will probably be confined to a provincial university with little else to look forward to except the problematic possibility of a professorship and a life devotion to some subject which often loses its glamour at the same rate and in the same proportion as he loses his youth. Both classes have ample vacations, but even during these months of freedom they can hardly hope to be more than visitors to the world outside their centres.

This may be considered an unduly prejudiced view of the scholastic and academic careers. Many examples to the contrary can be quoted, and besides it might be argued that any profession worth the name imposes its peculiar limitations. Nevertheless certain young people take this view. Schools and colleges are the first institu-

tions they see from the inside' with their inevitable defects, stripped of romance, and the prospect is not wide. Those in search of experience will travel farther than the scenes of their own education—if they get the chance.

It is this type of manhood—at once adventurous and intellectual—which ought to prepare itself for an overseas teaching service. It is not suggested that such men should have entered upon a course of special training while still in their teens, but the prospects and possibilities should be at the back of their minds from an early age. Their parents or guardians, and especially their "careers-masters", should know of this way of serving culture and one's country at the same time. In every public and secondary school the career should be as well known as the Civil Service, Army, Bar, or Church. Above all, it should be made clear that even if a would-be teacher does not wish to enter the Indian or Colonial educational service, or risk his future in the employment of some foreign organisation, he need not therefore stay in England, but can travel through some of the most interesting parts of the world, diffusing English culture at the same time as he satisfies his curiosity in life—past as well as present. There are plenty of obvious ways of bringing this information to those who ought to know. The methods need not be discussed in these pages.

At school the boy could dream of being both a teacher and a citizen of the world, while pursuing the same studies as everybody else. Nor need he begin to specialise as soon as he has gone to the university and passed his Previous, Little-go, or Matriculation. He will need all the academic culture he can get. It is surely better that he be left free

to pursue the studies which are likely to lead to a college reputation, culminating in a high degree. A first class was never yet an incommodity to those who deal in knowledge. Besides the human intellect has an individuality of its own. It is compliance itself when not crossed; nothing easier to lead if it have its own way. But no human being ever attained to his full mental stature or richness of personality, unless his thoughts were allowed to choose their own mental discipline. So the future representative of English culture ought to follow his own aptitudes, devoting himself to History, the Classics, Modern Languages, Economics and Politics, or Science, until he has graduated, thereby realising himself. In the meantime the cultural propagandist should get into touch with him, and if the future candidate is judged suitable, and his purpose holds, he should be nominated for the Overseas Post-graduate Training Course.

This contact could be established partly through headmasters, tutors, and educational advisers, or else through an application from the nominee himself. He should, of course, be interviewed by those who know by experience what type of teacher is likely to succeed. The actual decision is extremely difficult, because the youth with a future often develops slowly and on the surface gives little promise of what he is afterwards to be. So one has to distrust first impressions. The principle of selection, however, is easily established. A well-qualified nominee should have an agreeable and effective presence. Not seldom attractiveness and self-possession reflect a mind which has finished its development, and is mature, cast

for its role in life; so he must also give evidence of receptivity and awareness, generally revealed in readiness to learn things outside his own subject. He should be possessed by the spirit of inquiry, and be especially anxious to learn all he can about the conditions of modern life, actual and potential. Whatever his university subject, he should have an interest and facility in languages. It will not, of course, be enough that he has acquired insight into one particular language, for instance classical philology or Old English phonetics, just because his studies involve this specialisation. He must have in some degree a linguist's curiosity in the evolution of speech, because he will have to understand his pupils' language as well as teach his own.

These nominations should take place in the latter half of his undergraduate career; not too soon for his tendencies to declare themselves, nor too late to give a clear and practical objective to his remaining months of study.

Neither the scope nor value of his degree is of much significance. It is merely the hall-mark of the educated man, for his special training begins after graduation.

This post-graduate course may seem to the reader to be a secondary affair, merely the technical finish added to the solid foundation of humanism. It may perhaps be urged that any young man of the right sort will be able to pick up the "tricks of the trade" in a few months or weeks. Some critics of the old school might be inclined to argue that he should go straight to his work and learn his technique from experience and the advice of those on the spot. Such empiricism certainly suits the English temperament and has proved most successful in our

schools and colleges at home. But it must be remembered that the teacher who at the same time enters his profession and an English institute abroad has got to face a problem quite new to our educational system. Adaptability and resourcefulness are not enough.

What more is needed? That question will, to some extent, be answered in the next chapter, for the problem of learning and teaching a language needs a discussion to itself. But, before passing on to the theory of Linguistics, or, as it is sometimes called, the New Philology, the practical reader will not wish to leave the project of a training centre without asking where and how it is to be established. Once more, the answer is not easy. One naturally thinks of creating a department or faculty to be attached to one or more of the leading universities; or a big central institute in London—a university of its own. Either project needs careful planning and involves delay.

Meanwhile the recruitment of teachers will have to proceed. Up to the present, we are told, institutes have rooted, seeded, fruited in a variety of fertile soils and instructors have been sent out in a hurry as best they could be collected, mostly on short contracts. For the moment most of these centres are closed, but the demand has been transferred to refugee centres in England.

As regards the foreigners welcomed to this country the problem is simple. There are thousands and thousands of soldiers and airmen in different districts; many hundreds of sailors in our ports; all speaking every language except that of the country in which they have found shelter. There are crowds of civilians, varying from gifted students to those who will never understand more

than the use of a hoe or mattock. Most of these are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and need only enough conversation to buy cigarettes and ask the way to the nearest cinema. Some of the fighting men and military engineers benefit by specially potted courses in technical terms, and brilliant young men and women can (after a fashion) be accommodated at our universities. Clubs, societies, rest-houses and associations can be organised in seaport towns, and at inland centres. So this temporary war-time problem, however vast in extent, can be and no doubt is well managed. But when peace is restored, and the winter of our discontents is turned to glorious summer, the old foreign institutes will be reopened, and new institutes will be founded. Before the war the number of teachers maintained abroad must have run into three figures. A decade hence, that number will be trebled. The problem of supply will be complicated by the urgency and unexpectedness of the demand. Opportunities for institutes will spring up anywhere at any time with the reiterated warning that we must strike while the iron is hot. How can a body of educators (more or less) keep pace with a series of situations which arise unexpectedly from day to day? How prepare teachers for the special work they will have to do at a moment's notice?

The only hope is in a temporary and informal centre improvised at once, without any suggestion of public commitment, and with the help of the best available professors and lecturers. Luckily some of those we most need are at present the least occupied. Thus instruction might begin without delay, while the public bodies are

getting used to the idea and discussing the conditions and provisions under which they would consent to collaborate.

As has been suggested, candidates should be nominated before they take their degree, and then after graduation proceed to their special training. Nomination cannot be taken as a binding pledge to appointment, since no candidate however promising can guarantee that he has the special qualifications for his task. For instance, no one can tell for certain whether he has the talent to conduct a class till that capacity has been tested, or whether he has the faculty of acquiring modern languages, or whether he has a subconscious antipathy to certain breeds and races. Appointment must depend on the final examination.

In the conduct of this examination one condition is indispensable. It must be quite different from the formal and excruciating ordeals that every educated youth has to undergo before leaving his university—that week of hectic scribbling after months of seclusion and memory-burdened labour. Graduates will, no doubt, consent to re-enter this Valley of the Shadow of Failure, if they cannot otherwise get to the profession they have chosen; for example, the Diplomatic Service, or the I.C.S. But they will be reluctant to repeat the experience in order to become a teacher, since they can enter an English school or college, with dignity and calm, on the evidence of their university career. So the pill must be made palatable and unmedicinal. Perhaps it would be wise to institute a progressive series of tests and proofs disguised as intelligent supervision, each trial in itself a lesson and a step towards the final certificate of proficiency. \*

The organisers might also remember that though the enforcement of this scheme may be urgent, the scheme itself must be such as the public schools, universities, and Board of Education can approve. Among the candidates there are sure to be some who will not take up a position abroad, either prevented by private circumstances or ill-health (for instance, inadaptability to hot climates, or some physical defect needing expert attention) or because they lack one single quality indispensable abroad though not necessary at home. All such men should receive official recognition for the work well done at an overseas training centre with a view to appointment in England. The centre itself will be none the worse for contact with English schools and universities.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEW PHILOLOGY, AND ITS PLACE IN INTERNATIONAL CULTURE

LET us assume that the project of a specialised training-centre or postgraduate course will fall, or has fallen, into the right hands, and that the candidate has the chance of preparing for his future career. It remains to consider what he will have to learn. Let us suppose that he is one of the best; that he has absorbed the intellectual atmosphere which only a few discover at their university; that he has learnt all he can from his studious friends in those long night talks so enthusiastic that sleep becomes an impossibility; that he has an unusually acquisitive mind. What more does he need? In reply, it has already been explained that by far the greater number of his future pupils want to be given an elementary knowledge of English. So it is hardly wise to send out any teachers who cannot help to supply the demand. Wherever he goes, elementary English will be in the air, and therefore every member of the staff should have some training as a linguist. Here again it may be objected that such a preparation will only fill his head with recondite, not to say pedantic, erudition, indispensable no doubt to language experts in the big universities where all knowledge has its proper place, but a sheer encumbrance if he is to teach adult foreigners what they wish to learn. By all means let him be coached or rather smattered in the approved methods and systems, and then, guided by

experience, let him choose the technique most suited to his own aptitudes and the particular nationality of his pupils. Even so, he will in the end have to rely on mother-wit and common-sense. Many of the nominees will agree with this objection, since their interests are literary or discursive, the fruit of a liberal education, thoroughly at home in the world of speculation and ideas, thoroughly prejudiced against the technicalities and experiments unconsecrated by time.

Such critics might remember that these modern systems have arisen during the last twenty years or so, because it has at last been discovered that even a talented instructor is not qualified to teach English merely because that language happens to be his mother-tongue. His knowledge may be perfect, despite the colloquial licentiousness of the present age, but even so, he cannot realise and direct the acquisitive processes of the learner unless he has been trained to do so. In the old bad days, a living language was taught as if it were half dead. It was approached through the printed page, codified like a legal system, with its syntax, conjugations, and rules for pronunciation—a matter of words, not sounds. The pupil assimilated, the teacher demonstrated and corrected. This systematisation proved to be so cumbrous that John Stuart Mill advised all students to go abroad for their languages; a month in a foreign country was worth a year at home. Over the sea it was in the air, it could be absorbed at every pore. That advice was given in 1867 in his *Inaugural Address at St Andrews*, and experts have had the experience of three generations by which to test its value. The result is not reassuring. The student who

follows Mill's counsel and spends a few months abroad listening carefully to the spoken word all around him, and studying its grammar and composition under the old-fashioned direction of an amateur teacher, will be disconcerted to find that he still writes and speaks the language like a native of England. He will also note that his compatriots living abroad, after years and years of residence even in the appropriate atmosphere, seldom acquire the accent and thought-pattern of the language they continually use. Such appears to be the position of the old-fashioned learner under the most favourable conditions. Yet the pupils of an English institute will have none of these advantages. They will hope and expect to be rendered perfect without leaving their native town. Assuredly imitation and assimilation are not enough.

Formerly it was assumed that perfection was an impossibility. Perhaps Poles, Armenians, and other such polyglot peoples could completely master a foreign tongue, but the great monoglot nations of the West had lost the faculty because they so seldom needed it. Bilingualism was the accomplishment of specialists and experts. Nowadays the teacher has before him the choice of two courses. He can either persevere in this tradition, and relapse into the old philological methods, a legacy from the Renaissance, with the old results; or he can find out the underlying principle why languages are so difficult to learn, and so strike at the root of that difficulty.

The explanation is, in one sense, quite easy, almost obvious; merely a formula to which the inquirer can agree. But in another sense this formula involves historical imagination, an insight into the mechanism of

the human mind, an interest in the progress of civilisation, and sympathy with human nature. We have noticed that the humanistic student, proud of his liberal education, is apt to look down on these newfangled language theories and dismiss the neo-linguist as a crank. In reality he cannot understand their problem till he recognises that it is worthy of his erudition.

He will find that the acquisition of a foreign language, which he expected to be a mere matter of memory and imitation, is so much more difficult, because the learner seldom or never understands the linguistic faculty; how his own speech came to be fashioned in his own mouth and head. Nor does the teacher. They are trying with the help of a textbook, and some practical experience, to assimilate in a few weeks certain racial habits which took centuries to form, which were slowly evolved out of a nation's deepest and most intimate experiences. For instance, the Aryan folk left their common home probably somewhere in Asia, and moved westward along the table-lands to central Europe, bringing their common language with them. If they had stayed midway on their trek and regulated their population by the productivity of the land, there would now still be plenty of philologists, but no need of linguists. As it was, they split up into various branches making their way by successive waves of immigration into Asia Minor and Palestine, the Balkans, France, Italy, Scandinavia and England; known to legend as the Achaeans, Philistines and Gauls; known to history as the Teutons, Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, Saxons and Danes; the Norman conquest of England being the last of these national immigrations.

As a result of this dispersion, the original mother-tongue has also branched out into a number of separate languages. It could not have been otherwise. Each group had to adapt its habits of mind, and therefore speech, to the particular civilisation which grew up out of the soil and enfolded it. Thus its language became the record of its national experiences, as controlled by environment and the will to live. Since this vocal and verbal evolution has, in the case of most nations, continued for a thousand years or more, it has become a part of each man's mental and physical structure. During so many generations the lips, tongues, throats, and especially brains of each nation were being adjusted to its particular choice and use of words. Thus many curious passages in its past and present history are revealed by the terms and phrases embedded in its daily conversation, and the way those expressions are pronounced. One has only to trace the derivation of, for instance, *fear*, *danger* or *influence*. But the practical teacher is more concerned to note that a knowledge of two languages means living two lives and belonging to two nations. The student of a foreign tongue has to re-live centuries of vocal adaptation and development, unconsciously retracing the childhood and adolescence of a whole foreign people, at a time when he himself has outgrown the child's instinct to learn. Yet he may do so, even without going abroad, if he avails himself of the short-cuts which science has created.

This science is the new philology, the study of human nature and civilisation as revealed by the human voice, and every teacher who goes abroad should be able to apply its principles. Such is the first and most important

step in his course of special training, and when once the theory and practice are understood, his mind will begin to grow and he will rapidly perfect himself—and his pupils. That is why every representative of English culture should have some insight into the best modern methods and systems of teaching our language. This is not the place to draw up a list of courses, or to discuss the books he will have to study and the exercises he will have to perform, or the technique which he must practise. But the general reader should form some idea of what this preparation involves.

So we may take it that the nominee begins his post-graduate course by learning that every living language is composed of speech sounds, not letters which are a mechanisation, and that lexicons and grammars, at this stage, are to be used as formulas, abridgements of language-evolution, plans or maps, quite indispensable, since one cannot remember everything. But his first task is to study the sounds and articulations most natural to the human voice, the basis of every language, so universal that they can be indicated by a phonetic script, and through force of practice can at once be recognised and correctly pronounced. He should then learn to observe for himself how sounds are produced and modified by the position of the speech organs: first the disconnected sounds, then the combinations; then the divergences into this or that particular language (ours has forty-six sounds); thereafter the tricks by which his own language interprets its possessor's brain—the subtleties of inflexion, emphasis, incidence of accent, tone pattern, “the function of a word as determined by its position”—together with the

muscles which manipulate the lips, tongue, epiglottis and vocal chords so that they express the nuances of feeling and intention. Probably he will be expected to acquire the knack of making gramophone records of his own or his pupil's speech, so that the learner can externalise his own voice, and correct his mistakes, by hearing them perpetrated in utterances which he can hardly believe to be his own.

In a word the emissary of world-culture must be, if not a phonetician, at least phonetically minded. Nor will his humanism suffer because of these divergences from the "Waggon-Road" of liberal studies. It is no waste of time to study human thought through the ears instead of the eyes. Some of the greatest literature in the world from Homer to Shakespeare was not intended for the reader; and even now, a new meaning often dawns upon us as soon as we begin to revive the words as they originally came from the speaker's lips, with the sweetness of his dialect and the significance of his intonation (Chaucer is a striking example); all lost on the printed page. Robert Bridges has investigated the secret of Milton's diction; in some respects his researches seem to be almost pointless, till we remember that the poet composed his best work by ear, when he was blind. Much of the free verse of the present day seems incoherent, at the best "enchanted difficulty", unless we can get the poet to read it aloud, using his own voice as a commentary. Quite apart from these literary excursions, it should be remembered that even in this age of paper publicity and silent intercommunication, we nevertheless spend most of our waking lives in conversation, and put

more significance into our voices, than into the characters traced by our pens. Every spoken word, by its mere sound, is charged with inner meanings. So there are plenty of reasons why all educated people, not only teachers of languages, should be phonetically minded. Let us hope that the majority are not too superior to take a hint from Kipling who explained, in *Something of Myself*, "I made my own experiments in the weights, colours, perfumes and attributes of words in relation to other words, either as read aloud so that they might hold the ear, or, scattered over the page, draw the eye."

By the same sign and token, every teacher in the overseas service should be a word-psychologist; that is to say, he should understand the principle of a restricted vocabulary. This apparently simple device, sometimes the occasion of undignified controversy, may hardly seem worthy of so high a vocation, till its scope and method have been considered. It is, of course, obvious that the odd half million words composing the English language cannot be all taught at once; nor even the ten to fifteen thousand words comprising the stock-in-trade of the average educated and conversational person; the bare mention of such a prospect would give the pupil an acute attack of "linguistic indigestion". Speech must be doled out in small and frequently repeated handfuls—"little and often". From of old the teacher was usually guided in his choice by the inspiration of the moment, or by his pupils' questions. It was Professor Thorndike of Columbia who first undertook to subject this problem to research. He examined an immense number of books from the Bible to treatises on cookery; he read about

5,000,000 words; out of his exhaustive survey he compiled a list of 10,000 in order of frequency, and published his selection in *The Teacher's Word Book* (Columbia University, 1921). Then E. Horn compiled a similar list also based on 5,000,000 words, but derived from business and personal letters, and published the result as *A Basic Writing Vocabulary* (The College of Education, Iowa, 1926). These two compilations were then combined and revised by Professor Faucett and I. Maki into *A Study in English Word Values* (1932). This systematisation seemed so desirable that in 1926 Thorndike with the help of West, Faucett, Palmer and others established their idea more clearly by *Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection*, in the next year H. E. Palmer and A. S. Hornby produced *Thousand-Word English, What it is and What can be done with it* (Harrap), and in 1938 C. E. Eckersley brought out *A Progressive Course for Foreign Students* (Longmans, Green and Co.), a sequence of no less than thirty-six lessons created out of no more than 650 words.

These lists contain the words which ought to be the most useful because they are most often used. But the principle of the "word-count" is not so simple as it sounds. One cannot rely on arithmetic and nothing else, since words are the mechanism of the brain and every machine is much more than a list of its spare parts. They have to be assembled and inter-articulated. Frequency is sometimes due to diversity of meanings. For instance, will the *Rock of Ages* *rock* a cradle? Or again, does any particular word always serve the purpose of its synonym because it occurs more often? Instead of "The general of the Host" (*Authorised Version*) can we say "The

captain of the Army" (*Revised Version*) without altering, if not the sense, then at least the sentiment? It must also be remembered that the usefulness of words is rather like the values of coinage. A penny is not always preferable to a bank note, though it is more often to be found in your pocket. So the adjective *nice* is about the most frequent and futile in the language, whereas the words *awe*, *irony*, *adjustment* are rare but indispensable; at any rate they cannot be represented by any of the commoner substitutes. In fact, words are rather like stepping stones by which the mind picks its way among the experiences which make up all we really know of life, and more depends on the shape and direction of these aids, than on their multiplicity. Or, as a philologist would put it: some words are semantic, they indicate things (e.g. wood, engine, lamp); others directive, they point to an action (e.g. go, place, speak); yet others are qualitative (e.g. sweet, hard, high); and the brain has to play with these categories in its own experimental way, deriving the most help from the words which carry the most meaning, often lending itself to the most suggestive, following their lead; for one never can be sure that expressions do not inspire rather than serve the train of thought, like a breath of wind which blows a spark into flame. At any rate the regulation of a vocabulary is not a matter of mere frequency. Any word-list, however speciously ingenious, would have to be so disposed and tempered that it conduces not only to a limited facility but to self-expression. Otherwise it will not enlarge the learner's interests, and will therefore be difficult to learn. Accordingly, the pupil-teacher must study these word-

lists for himself, and decide how they ought to be composed.

Nor is it enough to choose the most essential words; they must be learnt in the right order and sequence. Last century it was discovered that, in a certain sense, the brain is decentralised. Different areas execute different kinds of behaviour; each set of actions is localised at a particular centre. Now we also understand that these "departments" are interconnected and work in collaboration. In addition, any anatomist will tell us that the co-ordinating power is vested in the outer covering of the brain, the cortex; and that this "roof-brain" has developed "association areas"; that is to say, it is partitioned into regions which do not directly take cognizance of sensation and response, but, so to speak, correlate and control the subordinate mechanism (e.g. reflex actions) much as a pianist disposes of his keyboard. Each zone functioning in the greyish matter which envelops the cerebrum is composed of nerve cells interconnected with each other by tangled processes of nerve fibres. The speech area (the most distinctive difference between men and apes) spreads over the left lobe from just in front of the sight area, by the hearing area, to below the motor area, and is closely connected with these others. It is the most contiguous of all the zones, and has no sharply delimited centre. Thus the faculty of speech is not only a closely organised association within itself, each set of words bound up with the others, so that the whole system is worked into pattern, but it is allied to the other highest centres of consciousness, and exchanges experiences with them. Professor McDougall has explained how we cannot even

think of eating an orange without the interplay of a vast concourse of nervous impulses, a mass of past experiences, tactual, auditory and speculative, as well as verbal. We do not notice the complexity because we are used to it. The teacher, however, must notice it. He may not be so psychologically minded as to analyse the associations, but he must bear in mind that words help each other, and also that they derive from other processes of thought and behaviour, and that therefore the order in which they are learnt, and the principle on which they are repeated and recalled to memory, are an essential part of his professional technique, even if he does not care to investigate the structure of the brain. Besides studying the choice of words, he must decide which system has created the word-sequence and repetitions scheme most likely to sink into the memory of the learner.

None of these questions can be satisfactorily answered till he knows why his pupils want to use English words. The choice of tools depends on the work to be done. Is it to read the masterpieces of our literature which, by the by, can rarely be interpreted or appreciated without a preliminary but not superficial knowledge of what the author believed and approved? Is it merely to find one's way about London; to ask the direction for Westminster Abbey or the nearest A.B.C. restaurant; to order a cup of tea; to leave visiting cards at a front door and produce a letter of introduction? Or again, does the pupil want to acquaint himself with the ideas and impressions of modern civilisation—to read what English journals and newspapers have to say, and ask intelligent questions when he visits a factory, museum, or administrative office? Or

lastly, should English be learnt in order to enable really educated people of different countries to meet and exchange courtesies or ideas, with the least possible labour and waste of time? Which object is most worthy of a first-class teacher's life-work? Which result will afford the best return on our expenditure of public money?

These and such like questions were being asked rather than answered, while two scholars, students of the human mind as well as of its expressiveness, had already come to the conclusion that cosmopolitanism was the most important object, and set to work to evolve a word-list which would facilitate international intercourse between any two or more nations. These two collaborators are C. K. Ogden and I. Richards. They prosecuted their researches over the greater part of the civilised world, in pursuit of what might be called *the economics of language*, that is to say, the fewest possible number of words (whether or not the most frequent) which will serve the greatest number of purposes. The problem was studied from 1918 to 1928. In 1929 the word-list was published. It aroused discussion and elicited suggestions from experienced and inexperienced teachers. These were considered. Then the two linguists set about the "grouping of the words in a frame-work for the purpose of getting them fixed in the memory". Thereafter they proceeded to develop the system by easy stages.

They had satisfied themselves that a certain 850 words were adequate to express all ordinary mundane ideas and sentiments which one educated person might want to communicate to another, whatever the difference of nationality. They called the system *Basic*, not in the first

place because it was the basis for teaching foreign children English, but as the basis of international intercourse—an auxiliary language, complete in itself. They further claimed that this simplification would compel the learner, even if English, to think before he spoke; to realise his meaning, since he had to renounce his word-complexes and catch-phrases (which for most of us have become habitual, not rational) and employ only the basic symbols which will communicate what he really has to say. The mental discipline ensured in classical studies by translating heavily charged English into Greek or Latin could be equally well ensured by translation into Basic. So the “debabelisation” of modern languages would at last be achieved. “Word-watching” would lead to “sense-spotting”. So next time the reader is bored by an harangue on disarmament, psycho-analysis, sadism, or James Joyce, he should ask his interlocutor to explain his terms in Basic.

It will at once be noticed that the method of word-selection is guided by function, not frequency; and the order in which the words are learnt follows the natural line of the learner’s experience, building a system for daily needs; first the parts of the body; then the business of eating, drinking, sleeping; and so on. The categories are not equally divided. For instance, 600 of the words are names of things, 150, names of qualities; and in every lesson or step, 20 of the first class and 5 of the second class are learnt. The arrangement is most ingenious; much thought is expended on the problem of getting words into their natural English rhythm; much use is made of plays, sound-records and illustrations.

This system was first given to the world in 1935 as *Basic Step by Step* (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner). Many other developments and expansions have followed rapidly, including special editions adapted to different nations; the translation of books likely to interest youthful and adult readers, for instance *Gulliver's Travels*, Shaw's plays, popularisations of science. Recently a Basic New Testament (with certain additions to the vocabulary) has been published by the Cambridge University Press.

It was necessary to give so much prominence to this system and discuss its merits so fully, because it has been energetically advertised, because it moves ahead of the demand with special editions ready when called for, and because it is addressed to adults even more than to juniors. So Basic is likely to spread far and wide by the force of its own impetus. For that very reason the thoughtful student must make quite sure that its qualities are not counter-balanced by its defects. He will duly note that the system has a higher purpose than some others, being planned to supply a means of international intercourse, but he will also bear in mind that other interests may be sacrificed in order to accomplish that end. The vocabulary of 850 words may carry the learner up to the level of adult conversation within a few months, but will it be equally useful for those who at present merely want to possess an educational knowledge of English? Of course, like other systems, it is an introduction. The pupil is being taught to walk in order that he may afterwards teach himself to fly. But even during this preliminary pedestrian stage he may have to look in vain for certain elements without which a language is an artificial acquirement.

For instance, he will notice that only sixteen verbs are included in the whole word-list and that learners may consequently miss a group of vivid and picturesque qualities associated with words denoting action. So their parlance may become unduly flat and jejune. He will also notice that for obvious reasons little or no poetry can be included, and that even in prose many fine touches of style, many expressive mannerisms, must be sacrificed, in order that we may feel our way among the skeletons of thought. Whereas in some countries there are still a number of pupils who want language as an introduction to literature, and their interest will flag if they ask for culture and receive utility.

Besides, the future teacher must remember that there are other systems far too good to be dismissed without very careful scrutiny. For instance, *The Oxford English Course* issued over the name of L. Faucett offers a much wider vocabulary, 1500 words in general use and another 1000 of more special application, and a generous supply of verbs which give free play to the emotions. Correct pronunciation is facilitated by the judicious use of phonetic symbols, of the kind introduced by W. A. Craigie. But the course is designed mainly for children, and adults are likely to wax impatient. So with *The New Method Course* supported by Michael West and H. E. Palmer and published by Longmans, Green and Co. The arrangement is admirable, each step adjusted to the age of the pupil who is likely to be at work, and the method by which words are recalled and worked into the texture for revision is most ingenious. But the full course lasts almost as long as the life of a schoolboy, and its interest

is likely to end where an adult begins. So also with C. E. Eckersley's spirited and conversational *Essential English* (Longmans, Green and Co.).

In fact, none of the systems is too good or too bad to be bettered, and he who would avail himself of their resources must make a comparative study and prepare himself to decide how one or all can best help him. Possibly some enterprising scholar will be inspired to start where these pioneers have left off, and create out of their labours and his own experience the perfect system.

There is one more responsibility to be faced. In this rapid and necessarily incomplete review, the name of each book has generally been accompanied by its date and publisher. The year of publication is given to show that neo-philology is recent and therefore still experimental. The publisher is mentioned in order to remind the reader that there is keen competition in this crusade for linguistic enlightenment, and very large sums of money are involved. The possible sales are already enormous; probably running into five or six figures. Could any one system capture the whole market from China to Peru, its string of simple and innocuous exercises would soon surpass the most bloodthirsty and erotic serial as a best seller. So those who control or implement the teaching of English abroad must expect to be reminded that they also implement and control financial interests, however unwillingly and indirectly.

During this post-graduate course, the future teacher will have to investigate many other problems besides the abbreviation of vocabulary, the technique of phonology and phonetic spelling, for instance, the values of colloquial

dialogue, memorising, repetition, chorus-work, and the proper elocution of his own tongue. He will also have to consider the use that can be made of films and the linguaphone. In fact, the training centre will probably be assailed by proposals and suggestions, none of them too good or too bad to escape consideration. These special points, however, must be discussed elsewhere.

All candidates ought to undergo this linguistic training and undertake these inquiries because, as already remarked, all may be required to teach language, or possibly to direct and certainly to discuss that teaching. At the same time every linguist should, as far as possible, be also a man of letters. It is doubtful whether any language can be really well taught by a specialist who does not understand its implications, at any rate in the more advanced stages, and were that not so, any teacher sent out at public expense should have the dignity of a man of culture. Nor should he be hopelessly at a disadvantage among foreigners who know more of civilisation than the commercial advantages of being bilingual. How is the newly nominated post-graduate to play this part? There is no established scheme of cosmopolitan studies to enlighten him, except in some branches of science; no satisfying school of European politics; not even a faculty of comparative literature, except in America. On the other hand he has already graduated, presumably with distinction, in some university subject, probably Modern Languages, English Literature and Language, or History; possibly in the Social Sciences, Mathematics or even Biochemistry. So it may, perhaps, be considered enough, if he be encouraged or required to pursue his favourite

study, as an expression of his intellectual personality, while learning linguistics. In the wider and, we hope, more cosmopolitan atmosphere of his post-graduate course, he may possibly be able to foresee how his academic knowledge could be enlarged and applied to the world's problems. He should at least be in a position to de-insularise his intellect as well as his sympathies.

A preferable alternative is the appointment of a cosmopolitan-minded professor, capable of creating a new learning founded on the data and conditions of international culture. He need not be a polymath such as flourished from the age of Trevisa to that of Voltaire; the time for encyclopaedists is past; but a humanist somewhat akin—*longo sed intervallo*—to Goethe, Matthew Arnold, Lord Acton, Sir Adolphus Ward, Gilbert Murray or Huizinga: a man of wide interests and scholarly precision, who can disentangle human intelligence from its national adaptations, and hand on his principles to the younger generation. If the older generation cannot produce such a leader, we must encourage the younger generation to supply the want for the service of those who thirty years hence will supplant them, even as they are now wishful to supplant their elders.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOME PROBLEMS IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF AN OVERSEAS TEACHING SERVICE, AND THEIR POSSIBLE SOLUTION

WE have now considered the scope and method of cultural propaganda, the type of man most likely to accomplish its aims, and the best ways of training him for his career. In the near future one Power will dominate the civilised world—every reader knows its name—so we should aim at creating a world-language, and a world-culture. The spirit of cosmopolitanism is the most urgent need of our time; its establishment will eliminate the wasteful and futile conflict of cultures; we shall take the lead solely because no other nation seems capable of the effort, putting our own learning and language at the world's disposal, ready to efface ourselves. Whether this responsibility is shouldered, or shirked, so that Europe relapses into the old educational rivalry, in either case the appointment of our teachers must be made in a professional spirit. So we have also considered the type of man best qualified to diffuse culture, whether ours or the world's. We have found that he must be a linguist who also understands the laws and lines of progress; as capable of learning other languages as teaching his own; one who can think as a citizen of the world, and behave as a representative of England should behave. In fact, the staffs of our institutes, as on a former occasion, must be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Finally, we have considered how these paragons are to be recruited

from the universities, and trained for their work in a central institute or faculty.

It remains to consider the administrative organisation behind this great adventure. In discussing so delicate a matter we must not forget that various public and semi-public bodies, and various independent and resourceful individuals, are already at work, and that all have far more successes than failures to their credit. For instance, the Trinity College of Music offers scholarships by examination in various parts of the world; the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency is known wherever foreigners speak English, and has become an inducement and encouragement to hundreds. As everybody knows, the British Council (founded in 1935 and granted a charter in 1940) has carried the English language and (where acceptable) English culture, together with films, concerts, theatrical performances, and even exponents of athletics, right into the cities where such things should be known and appreciated, and their activities seem to be limited only by the limitations of the Treasury grant. It should also not be forgotten that much progress has been achieved by private individuals, without any subsidies or public encouragement. The average Englishman would hardly believe how many educated personages abroad earn their living by teaching our language, or how many hours a day they work for how little remuneration. Both foreigners and English folk have here and there risked their small capital in private schools, often in towns devoid of other facilities for learning English, and we have to thank these struggling and embarrassed pioneers for creating an interest by which better equipped and

financed organisations have since profited. Above all, we have to thank the Americans, our allies in the war of culture as well as munitionment, who have founded some schools such as we shall not easily equal, much less surpass.

Thus, although there is much to do, much has already been done; more than most people suppose. A comprehensive discussion, however, of the many methods and means employed would far exceed the limits of this essay, especially in respect to the public and semi-public bodies. Moreover, it might arouse the kind of controversy which is a waste of time and temper. Besides, the whole movement, however widespread, is so recent that no system has yet been crystallised. The plans which were laid yesterday will probably be revised to-morrow, and any criticism might be out of date before these pages are out of the press. Nevertheless, the public which supplies the money ought to take an interest in how it should be spent, and for that reason has the right, in fact the duty, to form some idea of what can best be done. So it is proposed to discuss the principles of educational administration in neutral countries as if in Utopia, and without reference to any existing organisations. The reader can examine the facts for himself afterwards.

As a theory, the diffusion of culture among adults abroad is fair game, because it presents a problem which no official body has, as yet, tried to solve. The Colonial Office is mainly concerned with the elementary teaching of children. The tax-payer must look into the future—though not so very far ahead—and imagine at least two to three hundred professorships, schools and especially

institutes, not to mention other forms of propaganda, and ask himself how they can best be systematised and regulated. He must remember that they are scattered all over the world, worked into the social and political structure of countries very different from each other, but that they are all alike in being a long way off from London, the source of the subsidies. Who or what is to direct these activities?

Having drawn attention to the distance and diversity of our establishments, and to the financial responsibilities, one is half tempted to suggest that the management should be as autonomous as possible, after the manner of our own English institutions.

In this country it is fully recognised that the business of teaching is experimental, tentative, sensitive and needs very light handling. Even if there is an iron hand, the velvet glove must be thickly padded. So higher education has been allowed, more or less, to follow its own bent, and enjoys an amount of independence such as few foreigners understand, though many admire. Could we not, then, adopt something like this model for our institutes abroad? Could not these centres be treated as provincial universities in embryo, their share of the Treasury grant (instead of endowment) apportioned by some Board or Department in Whitehall, their powers of growth vested in themselves? They would each have a fully responsible director at their head, and he would in each case have behind him a representative and influential governing body. It would save time, money and miscalculations if the administrators were on the spot, with first-hand knowledge of the problems to be faced.

At first glance the proposal seems attractive. But a few minutes of reflection are enough to convince one that the analogy does not hold. To begin with, it is improbable that directors of sufficient importance and experience could be induced to leave their present positions and gamble on their chances of a successful career under another flag; their terms would be prohibitive, since they were plunging into the unknown. Were that not so, no body of governors, drawn from the locality, could be relied on to rise to the occasion; or if they could, they would be the exception which proves the rule. Even in our vast English communities, so crowded with different and separate pursuits that important personages may live next door to each other without rivalry or even acquaintance, it is nevertheless difficult to create a Board in which there is no discordant note, no obstruction through vested interests. In the smaller, less complicated, and possibly not more public-spirited cities abroad, one can hardly imagine a governing body so single-hearted that the affairs of the institute would be conducted in a spirit of unanimity and devotion to the cause. Perhaps the majority of members would be invited not because their advice was valuable, but for social or political reasons—because they liked to be there—and the Board would become an oligarchy. Perhaps it would harbour those who, on the contrary, were too active, but were involved in commitments, had made promises, had developed sympathies and antipathies among their fellow-councillors and the institution they were invited to govern. In either case there would be intrigues, suspicions, cabals and secret conclaves. The staff of the institute, and probably

some of the students, would soon scent this disunity, and perhaps attach their hopes and fears to certain personalities meeting thus behind closed doors, and afterwards not always honouring the confidential secrecy with which the deliberations were supposed to be conducted. And then, in one way or another, within and without, the whole venture would lose the spirit of good fellowship vital to its progress. Furthermore, if an institute were likely to cherish grievances and jealousies within itself, it would be yet more likely to cherish them towards its brother institutes in other towns and countries; sometimes with good reason. It must be remembered that different institutes thrive on different soils and in different atmospheres. In some countries the students can afford to pay bigger fees, and therefore the Treasury need not be so generous; in some others the climate permits the holding of summer schools, so the staff will not enjoy so long a vacation; in yet others there may be the opportunity of securing a particularly advantageous site for a much needed building; or again some enterprising director may know how to engage the services of most of the available phoneticians; or he may be lucky enough to need and secure some specially good teachers who can command higher salaries than are paid at other institutes. In countless details inequalities may and must arise, and if the central Board merely apportions pecuniary grants without special knowledge of local requirements or control of privileges, or even direct influence on salaries, vacations, allowances, and perquisites, the sense of imaginary injustice will grow as fast as the spirit of local rivalry. Teachers, being liable to overwork, are liable to

the inferiority complex, and those who direct and support them are equally susceptible to the same microbe. Somehow or other they always find out what is happening elsewhere. Once convinced that they labour under an unfair disadvantage, they would bring their troubles to the British representative; possibly the consul-general; more probably the ambassador or minister, the Englishman's first and last resort, when in trouble. So the embassy or legation would be deluged with appeals and counter-appeals.

Should, then, this body be responsible for the institute or institutes within its province? There is much to be said in favour of the proposal. Legations or consulates represent the interests of the British Empire, they exercise certain rights over public and even some private pursuits. In all cases of difficulty they are asked to take action or to give a professional opinion. In practice the mission will often have to intervene. So why should it not assume the directorate in theory as well as in fact? No doubt it would gladly accept the invitation, for our educational drive has become conspicuous; it is the talk of every town in which it makes its way felt; in some centres it is the most important manifestation of British influence. So in times of peace, the diplomatists are not likely to stand aloof because they are too busy with weightier matters. Yet the answer is quite simple, almost obvious: none of them seems qualified to guide an educational policy.

In raising this objection, one must be careful not to be prejudiced, because the diplomatic service is exposed to much private criticism, both at home and abroad. In fact,

if a second John Bunyan were once more to compare European society to a country fair, he might well place these functionaries in the skittle-bowl alley, and represent our legations as so many Aunt Sallys, at which every patron could have his coconut shy free of charge. The present is not an occasion for throwing coconuts. On the other hand, it is not the occasion for throwing bouquets, and any observer, however fair-minded, will have to admit that the service is recruited from young men who could indeed once pass an academic examination, but even in those salad days had no secret sympathy with the academic temperament and are not likely to have repaired that gap in their mental equipment. Their minds have been subjected to the discipline of an office routine in various countries, which enforces close attention to the external aspects of many subjects, on which they write minutes, but which they have neither the time nor the opportunity to investigate from within. They develop—some of them—a remarkable astuteness on matters of everyday business and intercourse, much insight into the motives and methods of those who play the same game as they do, an aptitude for estimating the world's price of the thing rather than its intrinsic value. Theirs is often the method of a teetotaler who might traffic in bottles of wine without appreciating the contents. At any rate the temptation is to simplify life by dehumanising its problems. Lest their unavoidable superficiality should be exposed, they must necessarily be guarded and reserved beneath their professional politeness, always on the lookout for some possibility of catching others, or being themselves caught. This defensiveness is all the more

necessary because of the ladder by which they rise to promotion. In most other professions success depends on visible results. A "secretary", on the other hand, rarely has the opportunity of distinguishing himself; his chance will come later; for the present, his chief takes the credit together with the responsibility, and the junior has to rely on the confidential reports of those above him. At least, so we are led to believe. These secret and subterranean channels are, no doubt, the only possible ways of ascending to the bigger world above ground, and many young diplomats have studied them so well that they forget the more open and public competition of values obtaining in some other professions. They would be tempted to work an educational establishment with the same kind of buried wires as control their own careers. That is to say, they would assess teachers according to private information, either volunteered or sought, without the experience to judge what the unpublished criticisms were worth. Few of them would inquire into the man's academic record, his methods, his authorities, his examination results, his classroom personality. Thus they would be disqualified for educational administration because they have acquired the dexterity to dispose of problems only at their face value, and to dispose of other men only as they dispose of each other. These disqualifications are all the more undesirable and inevitable, because the embassy or legation would almost certainly administer an institute as if it were a department or annexe of the chancery. Even if another and better way were known, there would be no machinery by which to give it effect.

Yet another and better way must be devised, because the elusive and complicated business of teaching is like no other occupation, least of all the diplomatic service. The maladjustment would not of course appear in the practical and technical administration—the matter of housing and installation, the registration of students, the choice of textbooks, the hours of instruction, the syllabus of courses, the dates and duration of holidays, and so on. Even the most junior and weakly self-assertive “secretary” would leave these arrangements to the professionals, although he accepted the final responsibility. The mistakes would arise out of what might be called the internal politics of the institute. Within that building there are a number of specialists who do not merely handle knowledge, dealing it out in marketable quantities as if they were shop-assistants behind the counter at Harrods, or serving the show-tables in *Les Magasins du Louvre*. They are, on the contrary, sensitive and rather self-opinionated individuals who are feeling their way into the art and science of their craft. Each is more or less committed to certain methods, systems, and points of view (according to his university and the professors under whom he has worked), but, as a rule, each will gladly unlearn his preconceptions on the evidence of his own experience, but not by any means gladly at the bidding of another. Each is also learning to adapt his own intellectual personality to a constantly varying stream of pupils. Furthermore, if the institute has been well administered, each has been appointed not only on account of his academic record, but also because he happened to fill a certain niche requiring a certain type of teacher.

Better men may have been passed over in his favour, that is to say, men better qualified for other posts but not for the one he fills. Thus every teacher incurs or ought to incur a special and individual responsibility, a touch of professional uniqueness conferred by his particular function, and this sense of adjustment is often the closest tie binding him to the organisation he serves. Not at all unfrequently it becomes a source of friction, since his love for his job may turn to jealousy at the suspicion of an infringement of his rights. In a word, it may be said that this class of worker subsists on motives and aspirations as much as on results. They deal in imponderables which become edged tools when one is dyspeptic, overworked, or discouraged.

Such men need a ruler—or rather a leader—of their own type, one who in his time has faced the same difficulties, has overcome them, and now enjoys respect as an authority in the same subject; who understands that errors and indiscretions are often the result of over-zeal rather than inadaptability, and that such lapses are to be corrected by advice and example, rather than by reprimands or even more drastic measures; who is sufficiently a connoisseur to discern sparks of originality and foresight in his staff. It is not always remembered that Henri Taine, one of the greatest philosophers, historians, psychologists, and interpreters of literature and art in the later nineteenth century, began his career in the French educational service, and that his bureaucratic supervisor was afraid to let him teach anything but philology; that was the only subject which could safely be entrusted to his vigorous constructive mind.

The present writer is not labouring under the delusion that educational administration consists entirely or even chiefly in handling temperaments with a hair-trigger. In many schools, colleges and institutes the staff is a happy family; if there is a disciplinary committee it has never met; and the head's only anxiety is lack of funds to supply all his increasing body of students want to learn. That is because this same head and his governing body know their business, and both the staff and the student-body know that they know it. Mutual confidence and a sense of security are the soul of educational organisation. But if the director himself is insecure, and the real management is in the hands of the British representative, himself trained in a very different school, and probably under the influence of the "secretary" or *attaché* detailed to supervise and render reports, any teacher worth his salt will very quickly realise that he is like a ship cruising in a mine-laden area. The more self-considerate will learn the new rules of the game, the best will either withdraw or not come. These latter are tolerably certain of a life appointment in the comparatively equitable and democratic atmosphere of the public schools and universities of England.

The disadvantages of bureaucratic administration can, perhaps, be illustrated by the question of appointments. Throughout this essay, emphasis has been laid on the exceptional difficulties and opportunities confronting the teacher abroad, and consequently on the need of discernment and impartiality in discovering the best qualified candidates. There is no properly prepared "pool" from which to draw by the methods of routine,

and, of course, no latitude for favouritism. On the other hand, few of those responsible for the appointment can help being influenced, if they happen to have known and liked certain applicants. Even among the most austere and judicial Boards in England such preferences are bound to play a part; and not without good reason. Every unknown candidate is something of a speculation. As likely as not he may hide some little bit of a moral skeleton in his ethical cupboard—testimonials and even confidential “references” are so kind-hearted—and even if their commendations are entirely trustworthy, it is surprising how often character changes with the change of circumstances, as Sir Hugh Walpole demonstrated in *Mr Perrin and Mr Traill*. So one half-unconsciously inclines towards the candidate whose merits and demerits are known at first hand. If appointments are to be vested in the *Corps Diplomatique* we should expect the same preferences to play their legitimate part; but not altogether with the same result. A man trained in a series of government offices is obviously not an expert on academic qualifications; however broadminded, he cannot possibly be expected to understand that an appointment means a peculiarly shaped hole to be filled by a peculiarly shaped peg. Probably, like so many non-educationalists, he will think that any teacher can teach equally well anywhere, just as an artillery colonel might ask for a draft of subalterns, quite satisfied if they are “in the Gunners”. Some men, used to a life of action or administration, seem persuaded that anyone can “get up the subject” and teach it, provided that they have used their brains in some other sphere of activity. For all these reasons there is a

risk that the preference for the known man will carry undue weight.

Such an inclination is encouraged by an otherwise most commendable practice, of which we all avail ourselves, and which may be designated by the now familiar expression: *the help your neighbour spirit*. Unfortunately the interpretation of the word *neighbour* is apt to be confined more or less to the service in which it is used. Unless every highly placed official is different from the rest of humanity he has a connection with a number of personages in need of an occupation. There are discarded though not discredited *attachés*, superannuated though not invalided veterans, ex-governors persuading themselves and others that they can still govern, a miscellaneous band of well-dressed, well-mannered gentlemen-at-large who can point to an impressive record of posts which they have somehow failed to retain. Could not a little generous patronage be exercised, since they will serve the purpose as well as a mere university product? The salaries will come from public money, but the gratitude will flow to the benefactor who assigns them. If educational institutions are to become each an annexe of the chancery, it is so temptingly easy to use them, now and then, as an honourable if inconspicuous career for the more unfortunate if less efficient brethren. The place-hunters are by no means unaware of these opportunities. History relates that when the war broke out in 1939 more than one legation found its staff swollen to at least twice the normal size, and since all the "temporaries" could not be employed in deciphering telegrams and filing correspondence, there was an immediate inquiry for teaching posts at the institutes.

It was most remarkable how many energetic young men wanted to serve the war in the most peaceful of pursuits in a neutral country—any loyal and patriotic occupation, rather than return to England where their talents would be wasted in military service or even in a clerkship at the War Office.

It must also be remembered that those who make appointments so easily must needs unmake them in the same spirit. Being bred to a service in which transfers, recalls and removals are frequent events, they are apt to think that a similar procedure is good policy in academic and scholastic appointments, not realising that a summary and secret dismissal in a civilian profession may involve much heavier injustice, and certainly arouses more suspicion and distrust, together with public comment, than would a disinterested and fair-minded inquiry conducted according to the Common Law.

In view of all these considerations, it seems better that even if our teaching centres are spread over two continents, their heart should beat in London. Distance is not really a disadvantage. To begin with, local intrigues do not thrive on note-paper; they need the whispering confidential voice, or the strident accents, the significant looks, the more significant nods and silences. And there is a more important reason. Every educational institution belongs to the people who frequent it. What they take away depends, in one sense, on what they bring. Instruction is a matter of mutual give and take. So, in order to introduce English thought, the institute must become an expression of the country in which it is founded. For instance, the methods which suit Egypt would probably

not succeed in Iceland. Even within a single country, each separate local centre is bound to develop an individuality of its own, in response to the will of its pupils, such as no outside body could foresee or ought to control. The administration in London should dig the ground and sow the seed, but not interfere with its growth. This wise and watchful negligence can best be exercised from across the sea; the eye of the master does not always make the horse fat.

Apart from interference, however, there is much to administer, and we must now ask what kind of office or bureau is most likely to succeed. One naturally thinks first of some new department under the Foreign Office, since cultural propaganda involves so many political responsibilities, and moreover needs the hearty support of the Treasury. Besides, that office, like some others, harbours a certain number of officials who are genuinely in sympathy with letters and learning. So the atmosphere (it may be urged) need not be uncongenial. But would it be progressive? A critic can argue with equal truth that these pundits may indeed once have been brilliant examinees, and even now may succeed in maintaining their scholarly interests, perhaps now and then contributing a book to their favourite subject, but (with three or four conspicuous exceptions) these achievements are hobby-horsical. Their professional life ought to be elsewhere. Very few have either the time or the versatility to keep abreast of technical or pedagogic developments outside their scope; and even fewer can realise that very possibly they are not quite so progressive as they think; their illumination may be only the aftermath of the lights which

shone in their youth; they may even be prejudiced against what they have no opportunity of understanding. In any case the administration of our cultural nexus would not receive much more than their casual supervision. The detailed management would fall into the hands of juniors not unlike those of the embassies and legations.

In these and such like dilemmas, it often happens that the enterprise is left to a private individual, not seldom with results which no other country could hope to achieve. One need only recall the first origin of institutions otherwise so different as the Indian Empire, "Lloyds", the Imperial Chemical Industries, the Automobile Association. Since we have no government department easily adaptable to the new activity, why not encourage some able organiser to create an unofficial propaganda? This solution has been warmly favoured in some quarters simply because it is unofficial. If the state functionaries organise and direct the enterprise, it will be under suspicion. But if it falls into the hands of enthusiastic amateurs, educational missionaries, peaceful pedagogues, the foreigner will be satisfied that the system is innocent of any political purpose, even if largely financed by the state, and sponsored by the embassy. So let us all vote for a public man who holds no position in the government, and leave him to recruit his band of volunteers, and direct their labours.

The proposal sounds attractive. Such a man, not undistinguished in his Past yet in search of a Future, can surely be found, and many subordinates will be willing to serve under him. He can be trusted, with their help, to give himself heart and soul to the task he has under-

taken. But will he not insist on managing so many other things that he cannot always be trusted to manage himself? Such is not always the case. One remembers, for instance, that William Morris, among his many other heroisms, financed and edited the socialist periodical *Commonweal* for three years, and that when his Lilliputian collaborators grew jealous of the giant, he had the magnanimity to resign, but continued to finance the paper he no longer controlled. Unhappily such self-effacement is as rare as eternal youth. The world seems to be full of ageing men who cling to their favourite work as they cling to life, growing more autocratic, capricious, and therefore less reliable everyday. Moreover, these men are not necessarily the best qualified for their public responsibilities. It was all very well for Dr F. J. Furnivall to live on about £200 a year and to devote his inexhaustible energy to inaugurating literary movements such as the *Early English Text Society*, thus opening a new pathway to learning. But his was purely an intellectual enterprise, manageable by any medievalist or bibliographer who had the leisure, industry and acumen; besides, it was indirectly controlled by all those scholars sufficiently interested to subscribe to his reprints. It is quite another matter to organise an enterprise which may soon embrace fifty or even a hundred institutes, not to mention other kinds of propaganda.

Besides, this world-wide government is likely to be attempted only by a man who has always wanted to be a ruler, but has not succeeded in proving that he deserves the nation's full confidence, and is therefore at liberty; like Achilles pondering in his tent. Or he may have been

superannuated, that is, wishful to start in a new direction though considered too inadaptably to continue along the beaten track. Such is the risk. One has similar doubts about his staff. "Enthusiastic amateurs" has been suggested. The designation is delusively comprehensive; it tries to classify the unclassified. For who are amateurs? Properly speaking, those who work for pleasure without pay and find their place in, for instance, cricket clubs and dramatic societies. But the staff of this proposed organisation are presumably expected to give their whole time to their duties and will therefore in their turn expect equivalent salaries. So they are professionals. The term *amateur* can only be used loosely to mean employees, or officers, who have not been specially trained for the work they are undertaking. If the suggestion of government control is to be avoided, they must be drawn from the civilian professions. These also are highly specialised; it costs time, money, and industry to establish oneself; so the candidates for this *amateur* administration are not likely to be those who have made good at the Bar, in the Churches, in the teaching profession, in a solicitor's office, or in business. To judge by everyday experience, it is to be feared that the majority will be those who have more or less made a false start elsewhere, who have not yet found their little niche in society's machinery; or those who have only just finished their education, and do not feel attracted to any of the recognised professions. Among them, perhaps, will be young men anxious to figure in one of the government services, but unable to pass the examinations, or afraid that their social connections are, like their parents, too poor and respectable. The ad-

ministration of overseas education is not (under the present supposition) governmental, but it is connected therewith, it is kindred in practice and spirit—the next best thing. Having missed the front door, they may not be disinclined to try the side-entrance.

These possible drawbacks should not be rigorously and unsympathetically stressed. England is one of the few countries in which the private person is still allowed to be the best judge of what he really can do. Moreover, it is common experience that if he begins by choosing the wrong career, he may yet work with all the more determination and efficiency when once he has found his true bent. Let him win an entrance on probation, and then prove his worth. In this way the enterprise would eventually be manned by a process resembling “natural selection” and the “survival of the fittest”. Unhappily this Darwinian principle assumes and implies that the proposed directorate of our institutes is at one and the same time an assemblage of untested novices and a fully constituted and experienced body capable of unlimited powers of absorption and assimilation. As if one advocated the desirability of an army of raw levies, because that same army had already acquired the tone and training of a veteran corps. It must be remembered that the applicants would come from different walks in life, with very different experiences behind them, and inclinations which are yet more different. Knowledge of human nature suggests that some are attracted by an “office job”, because it saves them the responsibility of thinking for themselves. When their unfamiliar duties require them to discriminate between the one right and

the dozen wrong decisions, they can draw back, postpone the fateful moment, and take refuge in clerical duties. Thus they learn the routine of the office without ever really understanding the business. Some others are attracted for the opposite reason. They glimpse the prospect of power, and dream of managing the complexities of educational administration, as if they were disposing of a game of draughts. Yet others may volunteer because they hope that the experience and the contacts will be worth while. They want to get more than they will give.

Let us agree that all recruits will not, of course, be of these classes. Our unmethodical methods are sure to produce some of the right sort. But their services will not have free play, because their colleagues are not all pulling in the same direction. There will be misunderstandings, unfair comparisons, private resentments, and confidential complaints. It may be objected that the unfit will soon be detected and "weeded out". But unless an office is very professionally constituted, it is not easy to decide exactly where the weakness lies. There is no need to consider the feelings of the victim, but we must note that frequent dismissals and transferences result in discontinuity, and occasionally in the loss of a good servant. Here and there a clerk—or officer—is in the middle of some negotiation or inquiry and then disappears. His successor has to gather up the threads, and if he overlooks some of the connections, he is not always disinclined to lay the responsibility at the door of the departed.

It is more important to note that this instability and disunion engender a spirit of rivalry. There is a restless rather green-eyed little gnome that haunts all centres of civilian competition and is very frequently heard in Fleet

Street, Portland Street, and West-End theatres. Wherever the atmosphere is charged with electric currents, it can breathe freely and whispers to the opportunist those inspiring words: *I'll get his job*. How far this still small voice is a genuine call to high endeavour, or rather to the arts of insinuation and unobtrusive self-advertisement, the reader must decide. Certain it is that the four words get a hearing as often as employees have to think more of their places than of the purpose for which they are placed, and discuss their colleagues rather than the spirit of their institution. By those signs you can tell that the gnome is not far off.

All or any of these risks will be run, if the direction of our institutes and of our propaganda abroad is finally and definitely to fall into the hands of "amateurs"—both the head and his subordinates—and if by "amateur" is meant *volunteer*, that is to say, professional men and women who have the wish, and may, or may not, have the experience, to discharge those duties. "Amateurishness" is advocated in order to assume the air of being disinterested—philanthropic and cultural, not acquisitive. But is this unbusinesslike precaution worth while? Other nations do not think so. Wherever the French, Germans or Italians have planted an educational settlement, it is undisguisedly administered by their government, and not therefore less welcome to the inhabitants. In fact, prominent citizens of the locality seem to support one or other of the rival implantations, each according to his political persuasion. The less prominent are not less intelligent and discern the real motive behind the propaganda, since that is how they would themselves act in our place. Those with a sense of humour are rather

intrigued by the competitive benevolence of the great nations, each so zealous in bestowing its educational blessings. Besides, the supervision and occasional intervention of the embassies are sufficient proof that the respective government is behind the organisation. So the "amateur"-ists are not likely to convince anyone who takes a detached view. If they really convince themselves, it is to be feared that they are like ostriches who bury their heads in the sand.

It may further be urged that such circumspection is not only futile but misdirected. We have already seen in chapter I that the culture of one country rarely, if ever, influences the foreign policy of another. Linguistics, literature, and science are not arguments which a war council understands. Cultural propaganda is, at most, a gesture of friendship and a glimpse of peaceful progress. The spirit of goodwill would not be less appreciated for being the official expression of the nation that offers it.

So we seem forced to conclude that the whole service, whether at home or abroad, must be national, in the sense that it must be more or less the official expression of the nation's will; and should therefore enjoy the same dignity and emoluments as the other first-class government careers. At the same time, this proposed service should be quite distinct from most others, because its purpose is an adventure in education. Where, then, are its directors to be found? The question has already been answered. Since its aim is educational, its rulers should be educationalists; that is to say, not necessarily transfers from the Board of Education, but men who feel in their bones the intellectual ferment around them, who can guess at the tendencies of humanism and science, and knowing

their way about the scholastic and academic worlds can also visualise the limitations of the average learner, and the best methods of advancing his progress. It need not be added that they must also be competent administrators, able to carry a multitude of details in their heads, without losing their sense of other people.

It is no use denying that educationalists in this sense of the word are few and far between. Now and then the type is to be found at the head of universities, colleges and schools; but not so very often, because the most broad-minded and brilliant scholars, bent on enlarging the bounds of science or humanism, generally prefer the headship of a professorial department in which their organising ability is free to concentrate on their love of research. Despite the certainty of a higher salary and the possibility of a knighthood, some of them shrink from dissipating their energy among the inconspicuous details of a principal's life. For instance, one cannot imagine the late Karl Pearson, engaged with his small army of assistants in eugenic experiments, consenting to spend about twenty hours every week in academic committees. Here, as everywhere, "men in great place are thrice servants".

On the other hand, administrators of learning might be induced to work in an overseas service, if it were properly institutionalised. At least that is our best hope. They would, perhaps, consent, partly in the hope of creating something new which may have no small influence on the future of the civilised world. They would agree all the more readily if they were not to be overwhelmed with disputations, committees and the details of routine.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE SCOPE FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR WHO IS ALSO AN EDUCATIONALIST

IN the previous chapter we considered what kind of organisers would be the best qualified to administer, supervise and inspire the diffusion of English learning and language abroad, whether as a national or international influence. It was suggested that the best centre would be London and that the spirit of the bureau should be scholarly rather than bureaucratic. This conclusion is bound to be criticised because the argument was based on generalities, and therefore could not anticipate practical objections. Any reader who has followed with enough interest to find fault, must again and again have been wondering how this or that proposal, which sounded so specious and theoretically advisable, would really become effective under the conditions of office work. So, in order to put his doubts at rest, let us imagine that we have to constitute some such Board, and, without reference to any existing institution, let us consider how business can be reconciled with culture.

No one, of course, will expect, much less desire, a detailed and technical exposition. Yet it must by now be clear that the functions to be fulfilled are not only many but various, almost irreconcilable, and those interested in our prestige abroad will want to know how the contributory streams can be canalised into a single river, flowing through fertile territory to the sea.

In order to form an unbiased idea, we must first recall the chief activities to which any future directorate is already committed. Whether it expands into an organ of cosmopolitan culture, or restricts its influence to the diffusion of purely English interests, it will have to move along certain lines, through certain points of contact, since these are already laid down. There are the Anglophil societies, generally inaugurated and rather jealously administered by the residents of both nationalities, but in need of financial help either for installation, or the payment of some official or other (perhaps a secretary, or a lecturer), and if the London Board of Control is to contribute money it will claim the right to a voice in the disposal. There are professors of English at certain universities, approved by the government in question, but nominated and wholly or partially salaried from England. Experts are invited, now and then, to "visit" an academic department or scholastic system and report and advise on progress and reform. Here and there schools (generally private and preparatory) are to be founded and staffed. Negotiations and arrangements are to be made for theatrical tours, operatic performances, exhibitions of pictures and films, the visits of prominent speakers who give one or more public addresses on subjects of wide interest. Even athletic professionals are sometimes enlisted. During the war many of these outlets have been closed. Or rather, they have not so much been closed as diverted. The national sentiment which formerly was courted in its own territory has now migrated to our doors in thousands of refugees and allied troops—and probably these war-time extemporisations will become

permanencies when the war is over. Lastly, there is the founding and staffing of institutes abroad, and the direction of their policy. It should also be remembered that nearly every day visitors from other countries, or from the provinces, are calling to discuss a whole history of petty and specialised details which they expect someone to have at his finger-ends. Thus, whatever organisation finds favour, it will have to discharge many of the functions associated with a governmental or business office. Quite apart from linguistics and literature, it will be responsible for the management of correspondence; the pay sheets and pension rights; the dispatch of books, periodicals, pictures, projectors and film-reels; inquiries into complaints and allegations; the assignment of allowances and grants (some of them based on a calculation of the ratio of costs of living); the tenancy, construction and installation of buildings; the rectification of diplomatic difficulties; the drawing up of contracts and agreements; the supervision of bursary-holders resident in our universities; even the travelling arrangements with the selection of routes, the certification of passports, the reservation of places on steamers, and in trains or aeroplanes, and the calculation of each traveller's costs. These are only some of the responsibilities in the day's work.

All this officialdom, of course, requires very competent supervision. Its efficiency is so important that some authoritative and senior officers must be in charge. Should these be the head directors in whom the responsibility is really vested? Some people think so, and imagine that if the arrangements run smoothly (which

may not always be the case), and the money is not lacking, the education can practically take care of itself. Launch the teachers on their careers, and they will make their own way. The office need not inspire or direct, until they make mistakes. At the most, an educational adviser might be kept handy. Thus the organisers are in danger of forgetting that the system which justifies their energy is, after all, only a means to an end. The bureaucrat becomes absorbed in his bureau, and unlearns the habit of looking out of the window, beyond the roof-tops. Modern office life, with its incessant telephone calls, its apparently inexhaustible circulation of files and succession of transitory occupations, does not leave much breathing space, let alone leisure, to take the long view. Even those few who once had the imagination to visualise the whole in its parts are almost bound to lose the habit. It is so much quicker to give orders than to foresee all the directions in which they ultimately take effect. The heads of departments are not so immersed in details; even their letters and telegrams are often drafted by juniors; but if they have risen by the same ladder, trained in the same cinema-like routine of desk-work and telephonic interviews, they are apt to mistake efficiency for effect.

So it seems as if there ought to be, as it were, two offices directing the overseas teaching service. First of all the business bureau with its responsible heads concerned with the administrative routine, all of which is indispensable, and then an inner circle, a smaller oligarchy, alive to the problems of education. This body should be the constructive influence, the soul of the whole enterprise, the acknowledged authority. As an "Upper

House" it would plan the policy, handing over the details to the business bureau, after considering their comments. It would control the spirit of the organisation, and be the public body, responsible to the nation for the results.

So the head of this board or bureau should not be an ex-governor, nor a staff-officer on the retired list, however high his rank, nor a member of parliament who had rendered valuable services to the government, behind the scenes. Such a man might under special circumstances render yeoman service in a college, or a centre for research, because in those and other similar cases the management tends to be almost exclusively in the hands of unpractical specialists, their heads in the clouds, or their eyes 'glued to a microscope, and a man of affairs may counterbalance their unworldliness. But in an institution such as we have been discussing, there is so much business to transact, and so many members of the staff rightly incapable of anything but business, that the directing mind or minds must compensate their specialisation. If an expert on office routine found himself at the head, the temptation would be too strong. He would be content to make his subordinates live up to his idea of what an office should be. They would end like Chesterton's boy in Battersea Park who believed that the motion of the branches produced the wind in the trees.

To justify this contention let us consider some of the most important functions of the directorate. As a first example we might take the appointment of teachers. It has already been suggested in chapter iv that these should be nominated before the end of their academic career, and then trained as post-graduates at a central institute,

and finally elected on examination. But that system of preparation and selection may never be established, or not for some years to come, and our educational missionaries may well continue to be summoned before a Board and chosen solely on the strength of their applications and appearance. Even if the central institute were at once to be constituted, it is undesirable that the best examinees should automatically become members of the service. So either at the first nomination, or the final appointment, the responsibility will have to rest with the highest authorities concerned. The decision cannot be delegated to the subordinates. For if money is the life blood of education, the teachers are the brain and nervous system.

The interview is of equal importance to the candidates. Whenever any Board meets, whatever the nature of the appointment, the short list is almost sure to consist of about half a dozen names, almost equally acceptable, as regards paper qualifications. The final selection depends on a few minutes' intercourse, often by a very narrow margin, after a conflict of verdicts. Some personal preference or instinctive prejudice may vitally affect the careers of all six.

Thus, for more than one reason, the problem and process of selection must be carefully reasoned and visualised. Those who survive and figure on the short list are like watches whose make and mark are known, but not the inner working of the machinery. Is it well regulated? Or is the tiniest tip of a tooth in the smallest cog-wheel just a trifle chipped? Has this or that applicant some disqualifying inadaptability, some touch of unconscious wrongheadedness, perhaps inherited or

acquired since childhood, and exceptionally inconvenient for the appointment under consideration? Or, contrariwise, has he that touch of dynamic devotion that can be trusted to sublimate any inconspicuous disability? It seems likely that the secrets are more or less revealed in the bearing, appearance, conversation and, above all, physiognomy of the applicants, but only if the inquisitors know what to look for, just as a watch-maker is the best judge of a watch. Each member of the board will look for the symptoms with which he is familiar in his walk of life. If that is so, we can be fairly sure that only those can judge the finer points of a teacher's character who are familiar with the type, who understand its temperament, habit of mind and consequently its mannerisms, who have for years observed the special caste of countenance and play of feature, and in this case have a practical idea of the difficulties which confront the Englishman abroad.

Even if the reader agrees with the writer up to this point, he may think that now the specialist's task is done. The most eligible candidate has been elected and placed. His journey has been arranged by the travel department; his contract has been signed. So his name has only to be inscribed on the pay-roll, and the administrative department can be left to regulate his increments and contributions to the pension fund. Unless some incident arises, his career should not require further attention from the educational experts in the London Bureau.

This determinism may suit business offices, public schools, and government appointments, in which there is either a system or a tradition to be gradually acquired

by long experience, so that the official ought to be learning something new about his work every year, and thereby become more valuable to his institution. But such is not the routine of most universities, except within quite elementary limits. A temporary assistant lecturer does not eventually become a professor, much less the dean of his faculty, in his own right. He has to earn his promotion. Most frequently, he leaves his original institution to take up better paid duties elsewhere. The explanation will be found in the fact that higher education is not so much a profession as a pursuit. The teacher of adults is not primarily concerned in forming character, much less in regulating the details of scholastic life, but in chasing the elusive phantom of knowledge, which changes its shape and direction, as often as it seems to be within our grasp. He leads his students to the likeliest coverts, as the M.F.H. leads his pack. But pupils differ from hounds in that they will not follow if they fail to pick up the scent. So a lecturer cannot prove his worth, unless he shows that he can keep pace with his subject, and those who want to study it. This responsible and adventurous pursuit is all the more hazardous because it offers a delusive semblance of routine. Learning has to proceed by what looks like a rotation of classroom instruction, annual groups of students succeeding each other, all asking to be taught the same principles. So a lecturer who could count on an assured and periodical rise in emoluments and dignity might be tempted to rotate in the same circle as the successive classes of pupils, himself the only unprogressive figure in the recurring sequence. Thus there would soon be justification for the

legendary student who did not take notes because he had those of his father. Meanwhile, the teacher would grow old in the possession of this world's goods, and in the art of economising effort. Besides failing to inspire youth, he would miss his second vocation. In higher or advanced education lecturers are not only teachers. The Arts and Sciences are the highway along which human progress moves, and we want a professional body of roadmakers to widen the track, smooth the surface, and project its course, over the uncleared landscape. Consequently lecturers are, or ought to be, given time and opportunity to work as pioneers, and those who lack the energy or the talents are like trustees who fail in their trust. That is why promotion in the academic world generally depends largely on original work.

What is requisite in our universities at home is much more requisite in our institutes abroad. There the teaching is largely confined to instruction in our language; at any rate for the present; and so the temptation to relapse into routine is even more insidious. Even in literary and humanistic courses the audience is not likely to be very critical or exigent, as long as the speaker's elocution is good and they can all understand what he says. So it would be most undesirable to assure a teacher of a steadily rising salary up to old age, unless he proves that his abilities are expanding with his income. Besides, his function, whether literary or linguistic, is no mere makeshift at the service of propaganda. As has been shown in chapters II, IV and VI, it is a highly complex and difficult art which will, perhaps, have no small influence on international relationships. Above all, it is new; a

tentative and experimental system which urgently needs developing. For both these reasons, no teacher should be allowed to hold his responsible position unless he can play his part in perfecting the methods. In the third place, the emissary of English or cosmopolitan culture and language, like his brethren in our home universities, should not imagine that his duties end as soon as he leaves the classroom. In the phase of civilisation on which the world has entered, an intimate and sympathetic insight into the psychology and social habits of other peoples—their national individuality—is indispensable. Up to the present we have had to rely chiefly on casual and self-appointed investigators; many regions are still unexplored; and now at last we have the chance of organising and encouraging what might be called the Study of Comparative Nationalism. Every teacher who has no bent for improving the methods and systems of foreign teaching should be expected to contribute data towards understanding the mentality and traditionalism (or, as the psycho-analysts would say, the collective *persona* and *anima*) of the nation among which he works.

This fascinating vista of scholarly activity will remain a dream and no more, unless the careers of our teachers enjoy as much expert and conscientious attention as their original appointment. The highest authorities ought to know not only where each emissary is placed, but what he has achieved, and in what direction those achievements are tending. It should be an important element of policy to decide which kind of progress is needed in which area, and to assign transfers and increments accordingly. Among the staffs abroad there can be no greater

encouragement than the assurance that every piece of independent work, every assertion of talent, every voluntary service, is noted and appreciated on its own evidence. For this purpose a periodical might be founded to circulate notes and abridgements of the researches made in each centre, together with reviews of the English books most likely to be useful abroad. The most constant and conscientious readers of this journal should be, not the junior members of the staff at some remote institute in Egypt, Iraq, South America, or the Balkans, but the directorate of the Central Bureau in London. If this august body cannot appreciate the intellectual initiative of its employees, there will be endless mistakes in the promotions from one grade of salaries to the next, and in the addition of "invisible wages" by transference from some desolate and barbarous region to a centre humming with civilised life and glowing with conviviality. It is, I fear, to be assumed that derelictions should be noted just as carefully, after the manner of the senior government services, which never forget nor forgive.

It would seem, then, that those who hope to administer well must have not only a sense of facts, but also a sense of their inner meaning. The same principle might apply to another propagandist institution: the granting of scholarships and bursaries. Here again we are faced with a practice of which the advantages seem so obvious that the difficulties are likely to escape the eye of the approving layman. In fact, the whole situation becomes bewilderingly complex as soon as it is carefully considered, and one begins to wonder who are the most competent people to handle it.

Certain foreign powers have not been content to sow broadcast a smattering of their language and literature. Wherever they penetrate, they invite a select number to visit the fountain-head and imbibe their humanism, science, or technology at first hand, in one of their big universities. This system encourages and establishes intellectual and social contacts; it combines scholarly redirection with insight into the internal culture of a great people; it offers a "spiritual home" for the restless; best of all, the impressions should endure after the guests have returned to their own country. Obviously the scheme is too promising to be obstructed, but for that very reason its promises should be examined in the light of practical experience. The reader will have noticed that so far we have recommended it only in general terms, by the help of catchwords.

The Germans are, or were, the leaders in this approach, and the most thorough exponents. Their favourite method is to take a number of students at some advanced stage of their studies—either in their final undergraduate year, or soon after graduation—and offer to complete or extend their course, giving them credit for the years of attendance at their own university, together with maintenance, or some other form of subsidy. If this system were to be fully enforced, its influence would be world-wide. It might be possible to control the education of all the countries in which they were interested. They would, of course, select the best students (or accept the nominations of the university concerned, that is to say, of the government), especially the future or actual teachers in all branches; they would train them along German lines,

if practicable award them a German degree, and send them back to be professors, lecturers, or schoolmasters in their own teaching centres.

If this scheme, however, is to produce any really effective result, the number of appointments must be very large indeed; an isolated teacher here and there is clearly not worth while; and, as a matter of fact, the scheme has been so vigorously applied, that some university staffs seem to be almost entirely manned by German-taught professors. This widespread penetration has been rendered possible, because the German university system is well adapted to the purpose. As everyone knows, it is quite usual for even German students to complete a semester in one town, and to complete the following semester in another town, not unlike the travelling scholars of the Middle Ages, and so newcomers of any race and breed can nearly always be assimilated and adjusted without contravening the regulations. Besides, academic education is under the direction of the state, and a stroke of the pen can grant exemptions and privileges, without any extraordinary financial outlay. So hundreds of foreign students can be accommodated, and obtain their diplomas in a year or two. The same is more or less true of other countries, except England. As everyone knows, our universities are self-governing institutions, rightly jealous of their educational integrity, and therefore not easily beguiled of their degrees and titles by those who want to make a short-cut through the curriculum. It is generally necessary to stay the full course if one is to earn the honour of its consummation. Moreover, as parents are well aware, our universities are at least two

or three times as expensive as those on the Continent, especially Oxford and Cambridge. So what with the prolonged residence, and the heightened cost of living and tuition, we could not compete with the Germans in effective numbers, unless prepared for an almost prohibitive expenditure.

There is an alternative. Since other countries can manage the academic population more easily, it might be advisable to make no special effort in that field, but bring our influence to bear on other walks of life. There are engineers, designers, agriculturists, doctors, government clerks, dentists, bankers, and dealers. Or again, there are active and able individuals, whose "trade or calling" is the direction of public opinion, for instance novelists, poets, politicians, journalists, priests. Both classes might learn much from a single year at Oxford, Cambridge, London, or elsewhere, and would be none the worse for not adding B.A. or B.Sc. to their names. This alternative is likely to appeal to British sentiment, because we are all rather inclined to under-value exact learning and over-value prestige. Most of us honestly believe that if a foreigner is once fairly initiated into any of our great institutions—and why not our universities as much as any other?—and has the chance of understanding the one country in which there is still a place for everyone, then he will be pro-British for the rest of his life. If so, each bursary creates a self-appointed apostle, who cannot help spreading the gospel. Thus the two countries will be brought closer together.

Once more it must be confessed the prospect is so attractive that one cannot help asking how we can be

assured of not missing success. Looking at the problem from outside, by the light of general experience, there certainly seem to be difficulties in the way. Let us consider the latter class first, those who influence public opinion. It is a question of influencing a friendly nation, not *en masse*, but through individuals, so in the first place success depends on the selection. But how are these miscellaneous and elusive folk to be selected? The university degree is not a sufficient criterion, some of the best may not have one. A special examination, written and oral, is even more out of the question, unless it offered a choice of every conceivable subject, like the old I.C.S. examination, and even then some of the best would not sit for it. It remains to invite applications and sort out the most likely candidates on the evidence thereby afforded. But who are the best candidates? By what sign should we know them? One would be inclined to suggest that we want men and women already disposed to international friendship, gifted with powers of intellectual absorption, and specially adapted, by position and personality, to impress their own countrymen. Unfortunately these problematical qualifications are very difficult to judge from observation, or certify from inquiries. In addition, all sorts of secondary conditions suggest themselves, such as an age limit, previous residence in Germany, France, Italy or England, knowledge of the language, a means test, and other principles all too controversial or technical for this introductory essay. But there can be no doubt that the search for talent of this sort is something new, unsupported by precedent, lacking in recognised criteria, almost a speculation, and

that wrong decisions will defeat their object by causing public dissatisfaction.

Adverse criticism is particularly to be avoided because these appointments become, in a certain sense, an institution belonging to the country we approach, that is to say, one of their national opportunities, an addition to their choice of careers, a matter for public comment and official consideration, implying certain rights of participation. Therefore they excite far more interest than would the award of travelling fellowships by one of our universities. All possible and impossible recipients feel entitled to criticise the selection, and are naturally sensitive to any imagined irregularity. Even the quite detached observer can perceive two more reasons why the award of bursaries is a delicate undertaking. It involves the handling of money, and all over the world, wherever there are dealings in this "root of all evil", there is sure to be friction. The sanest philosophers are liable to lose their sense of reality, when they begin to consider what they are going to pay or be paid. The other reason is concerned with a no less potent influence—human vanity. Let us suppose that ten bursaries are offered in some one centre and that there are two hundred applicants. By the time the final list is drawn up, we are left with one hundred and ninety disaffected candidates, of whom the majority are sufficiently sons of Adam to believe that they ought to have been appointed. Will the other 5 per cent compensate for this unfortunate impression by their gratitude, and by their residence in England? Not all Englishmen who have studied abroad as well as at home prefer the English system or lack of

system; and many students of other nations are temperamentally more adapted to the French or German way. Some cannot accommodate themselves to the casual manner of our lecturers, and to our tutorial methods. Nor do they all find their place in the fire-side intimacies of our residential colleges and hostels. Of course, student life has the buoyancy of youth, but learning is, or ought to be, an anxious and intensive pursuit, and those who take it seriously are easily discountenanced and discouraged. No doubt they will all make good progress, satisfy their instructors and admit that they enjoy themselves. Who would not be glad of the experience without the expense? But it yet remains to be seen how many really care for the country as well as for the particular work in which they are engaged. Because a man learns something new about building bridges, kindergarten education, the banking system, tropical diseases, marine law, or the nineteenth-century novel, thereby improving his career in his own country, it does not necessarily follow that he will thank England for his chance of a richer, fuller life. All the world over, successful men and women acquire the habit of thanking nobody but themselves. It is generally the less efficient who meet criticism by explaining that they learnt to make their mistakes from some acknowledged authority; just as the more pedantic critics of the Renaissance used to take shelter behind Aristotle.

We might, of course, avoid speculation in miscellaneous talent, as well as competition in scholastic and academic education, and concentrate our attention on some other definite utilities, for instance, mineralogy, tool-manu-

facture, fisheries, economics, pathology, afforestation, librarianship, and train a certain number of professional men and women in one or more of these or other such faculties, always keeping to the same line or lines. By this means we ought soon to establish a genuine English tradition in one or more of the essential branches of the nation's civilisation, acting in close consultation with the governments concerned. Such a policy would lead to official friendliness and technological collaboration, but one doubts whether the contact would be sufficiently widespread and popular to bring the national sentiment of the country into touch with ours. Besides, specialists are inclined to work quietly at their jobs and do not usually make their influence felt outside the professional circle.

The reader who has had the patience to follow these rather specialised considerations will nevertheless not be blind to the possible grandeur of the scheme. There is something inspiring in the thought that the biggest nations should throw open the doors of their universities to the world, ready with a gesture of hospitality to share the best they have to give, and ask only to be paid in the coinage of goodwill and friendship. Such will be the issue of the present experiment. But just because great ends have small beginnings, it was desirable to review the initial difficulties which present themselves as soon as one begins to think instead of dreaming, and to suggest that the first condition of success is a clear conception of the part which bursary-holders can play. So it must be remembered that they are not elected, as English scholars used to be, on the grounds of poverty, nor as English

scholars now are (except those in training colleges) on competition in their chosen examination subject. These foreigners are invited to be partners in a great international purpose, and ought to be enlisted on that principle. In other words, the organisation should be (and perhaps already is) in the hands of experts familiar with the limits of academic study and the range of academic influence. Such experts will have to feel their way, collecting their data as they advance.

But since it is unsatisfactory to raise problems without contributing to their solution, at any rate under correction, one might suggest that all the leading universities should form special faculties of international studies, each teaching its special subjects with a view to their usefulness abroad, each adapting the necessary regulations so as to facilitate the attendance of foreign students appointed for this purpose. These courses should culminate in a diploma, distinct from the regular Arts and Science degrees, but such as all nations could recognise and respect. Candidates could then be selected with a view to these opportunities.

To pass on from such prospects to the consideration of films is like descending to a bathos. It rests with our proposed directorate to decide whether the bathos will continue to yawn.

In discussing the possible uses of the cinema, we are not concerned with *screen journalism* in its highest sense as a means towards national propaganda. British events, achievements and interests should obviously be advertised or rather visualised all over the world, not only such spectacles as the Derby, the Cup Tie Final, the

Dunkirk Epic, or the more romantic industries such as the herring fishery so vividly displayed by Grierson's *Drifters*. We are the only nation left with an idea of pageantry, and our big public functions—coronations, burials, inaugurations—should be made known to all who cannot see them for themselves. Such exhibitions, however, are clearly a matter of routine administration and do not concern a body of educationalists. But these specialists will some day have to decide whether the film industry can be adapted to the higher purposes of intellectual and cosmopolitan propaganda.

The question cannot be resolved without much thought, because we are not yet certain as to the influence of the cinema on the spectator's mind. We know that it enlarges and stimulates the *sense* of sight. It does so by beguiling the onlooker into unfamiliar angles of visual experience, for instance a man climbing the outside ladder up the lighthouse wall, as seen from below on a slant, or the bird's-eye view of human activity in the mass as in *Ben-Hur*. It does so, again, in the "carton-films"—*Mickey-Mouse*, *Jungle Rhythm*, *The Jazz Fool*—which transport the spectator into a world of grotesque fantasy, seemingly real, because we associate the screen with the camera and "the camera cannot lie". It stimulates the sense of sight even more by the recent technique, the "fade-in", the "fade-out", the "dissolve", the "close-up", the "panning", by which the normal landscape acquires the dramatic appeal of abnormal perspectives; and the firmest and most steadfast objects, for instance a monument, a mountain side, are endowed with movement, and pass before our eyes as if in a dream fugue;

and even actual events and episodes pass in and out of our consciousness, like involuntary thoughts in a novel by James Joyce or Virginia Woolf. In fact, the camera, which is keener sighted than we are, can work wonders when restricted to its proper function. Most wonderful of all it can play tricks with time; making plants grow in a few seconds or horses gallop so slowly that we note the movement of each muscle. It has almost penetrated to a Fourth Dimension of its own.

But we also know that, thanks to this technique, sense excitation is accompanied by mental restfulness. The spectator need not contribute any effort of imagination or thought. He reclines in his velvet seat and his brain is worked for him. If the villain has to be pursued from room to room, and then over the tiles of the roof, or a motor-car has to race a railway train, every stage of the action is fully depicted. Even if two individuals are to meet in the thronged and hurrying street, we must first have a view of the thoroughfare from above, then from the level, and then an inset in which the two profiles confront each other. Sometimes a scrap of paper, a foot, a finger, a ring is enlarged and thrown into relief, lest the spectator should miss its significance in the consummation of the story.

As a consequence, it is noticeable that when a film handles a literary or artistic theme, it is not adapted to inspire thought. For instance, *Journey's End* offered in a few seconds some glimpses of the indescribable horrors of No Man's Land beyond the reach of the stage or the reader's imagination; *Wuthering Heights* exploited visions of wild Yorkshire scenery such as no book-illustration

could encompass and few readers could imagine, however well they knew the district; *The Invisible Man* multiplied the effects of invisibility beyond Wells's powers of description; but none of them—and many more could be quoted—told the story as the author conceived it, or aroused the emotions which he or she inspired. *Zola*, one of the best films ever produced, gives no insight whatever into the great "naturalist's" literary significance, or even the scope of the Rougon-Macquart series. Some of the most ambitious films (one might quote *Chang*, or *The Four Riders*) failed to achieve the sense of realism; their scenic devices were too transparent; so they appealed only to the very young in age or mind.

It would seem, then, that in life we generally use our eyes (as Bergson explained) in order to pick our way among phenomena which we do not even try to understand. We glimpse the outline and appearance of our environment more or less in detail, but only in order to turn objects to our immediate use. Such is the main value of daily visual experience; and such also must be the range of the cinema's influence, since its appeal stops short at the sense of sight. On the other hand, it is a necessity of culture to penetrate (as far as humanly possible) to the essential reality of experience for its own sake, without a thought for the exigencies of the moment, or any other transient and practical distraction. So it looks at present as if films will not play a part equivalent to their very considerable cost except in the most elementary and casual education.

It may be objected that these criticisms apply only to the commercial cinema, which has enjoyed so gigantic

a success that many people, including the present writer, have forgotten the instructional and semi-instructional films. But it remains to be seen whether or no these also function under the same psychological limitations; whether they can appeal only to the eye-sense, leaving the spectator to supply the thought.

If so, it will not be the fault of the many ingenious and largely disinterested investigators who are busy thinking out new ways of making the screen illustrate the interest we could and should take in life. To quote only a very few typical examples, they have shown us bird-life "In the Tree Tops"; the descent of the Monterosa on skis, so scientifically as well as realistically reproduced that we can study the muscular movements of the performers at each turn and twist in their zig-zag course; the successive stages of English education from the primary schools to colleges, with scenes from the classrooms, and the boys trooping to roll-call to the sound of a bell; teachers handling their language lessons, even explaining the pronunciation of vowels; specially films for foreigners illustrating experiences in a strange country, notably the business of arrival or departure at a railway station.

It does not concern us whether these and hundreds of other ingenious pictures are worth seeing and listening to, but whether they are indispensable aids to the education of adults in the cause of cosmopolitan culture. Obviously they serve as stimulating though costly topics in conversational classes. Or they might be used to illustrate the background of our nature poets, for instance, Wordsworth's *Michael*, Meredith's *Woods of Westermain*, Masfield's *Everlasting Mercy* or *Dauber*,

W. H. Hudson's *Downland*. Even so, they are really valuable only so far as the spectator brings with him, already acquired, the necessary knowledge for artistic or literary interpretation; and in that case movement is not an advantage, the purpose can be served by static pictures which cost next to nothing. Possibly the most promising field would be found in the study of world-wide utilities and industries such as those illustrated by photographs in H. G. Wells's *Work, Wealth, and Happiness of Mankind*. The student could watch the processes in which he was interested and hear the special phraseology—even the technical expressions and comments which accompany the work.

Be that as it may, a permanent committee should devise or create lines of study for which a talking film is adapted to play a part equivalent to its cost. Whether they will succeed must be left to experience. On that note the present discussion should end.

## CONCLUSION

THIS short essay has been written to give the general public some idea of cultural propaganda, both the main outline, and a glimpse into the less obvious but inevitable difficulties which accompany its progress. A full review is impossible. It would require several compact volumes to describe the many ways in which the knowledge of English life, literature, language and thought is being spread over the world, and the readiness with which the message is being received. How many people realise its significance? It implies that this island is accepting a new responsibility; that we not only have a spiritual heritage of our own—a national soul—but that somehow this possession is incomplete unless shared with other nations. The tendency towards cosmopolitanism must be genuine because the movement began sporadically, of its own accord, as if from an inward impulse. Now the scattered and tentative activities are steadily being concentrated into the hands of a single organisation, the British Council, in order that they may range yet farther afield and in more varied forms. But it still remains to be seen whether diversified propaganda will assume a conscious unity of purpose, a clear conception not only of what we can give but of what the world really needs. Such a consummation needs the support of public opinion, for an enterprise does not become national unless the nation is behind it—at least not in this country.